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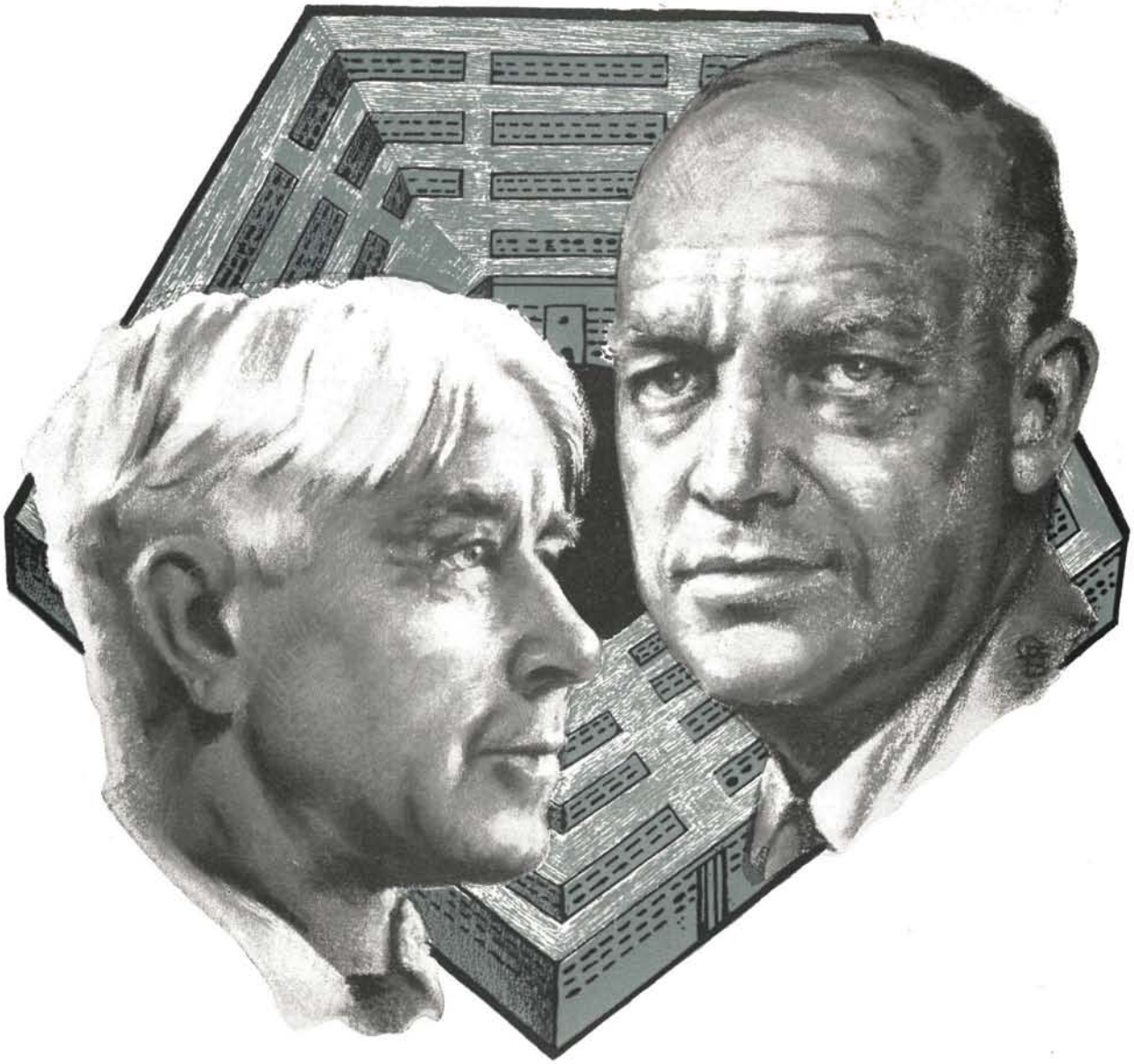

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By DUNCAN EMRICH

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By Peter Calvocoressi

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This Week

Cover Drawing by Frances O'Brien

Annual Poetry Number

William Rose Benét, *Editor*

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THE art of poetry during the English Civil War of of 1641-9 was violently polemic. Most of the works produced in the field were unabashed political propaganda from the Roundhead faction or the Cavalier camp. The works of John Taylor, a particularly prolific Royalist versifier, occupy many pages in the Oxford publication records of the time. Written in a peculiarly scurrilous style, they include a poem published in 1644 under the title: *Mad Verse, Sad Verse, Glad Verse and Bad Verse. Cut out, and slenderly sticht together, By John Taylor. Who bids the Reader either to like or dislike them, to Commend them, or Come Mend them.*

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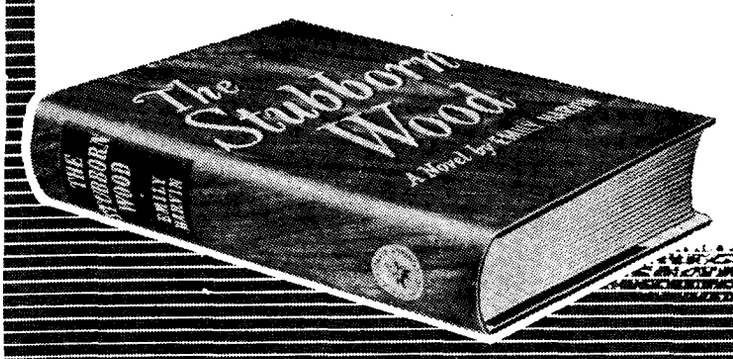

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TRADE Winds

FRANK LUTHER MOTT'S "Golden Multitudes," the story of best sellers in the United States, has provided the basis of a new parlor game that is intriguing the literati these late-winter evenings. Dr. Mott lists twenty-one books that have sold more than two million copies each in this country. The game consists in seeing how many of the twenty-one can be identified by individual participants. Ten or twelve titles are easy, but it is a knowing soul indeed who can dream up the remainder.

In case you haven't Dr. Mott's book at hand (The Macmillan Co. rather hopes you have), here are the twenty-one books, listed alphabetically and with their authors:

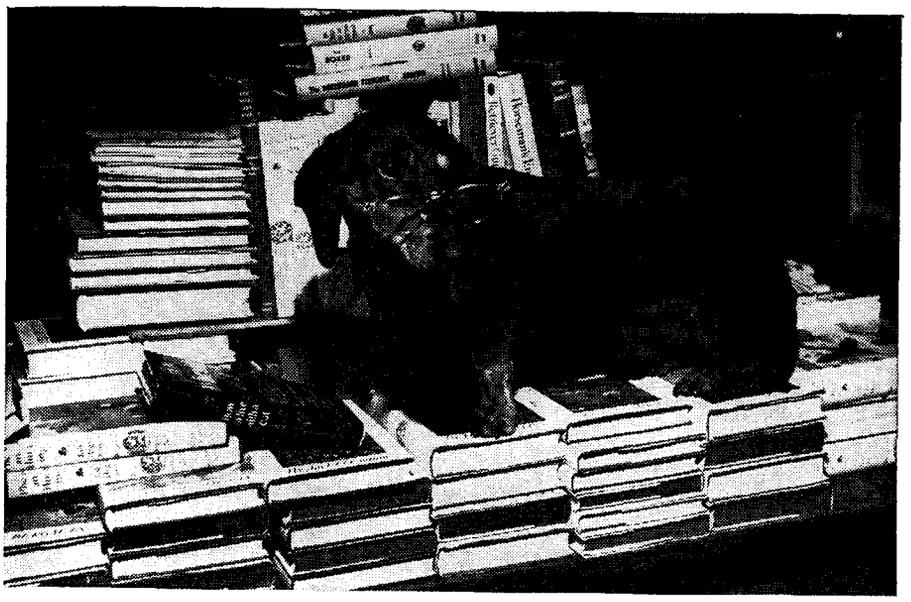
"Alice in Wonderland" (Carroll)
"Ben-Hur" (Wallace)
"A Christmas Carol" (Dickens)
"Gone with the Wind" (Mitchell)
"How to Win Friends and Influence People" (Carnegie)
"In His Steps" (Sheldon)
"Ishmael" and its sequel, "Self-Raised" (Southworth)
"Ivanhoe" (Scott)
"The Last of the Mohicans" (Cooper)
"Little Women" (Alcott)
"Mother Goose"
"One World" (Willkie)
"The Plays of Shakespeare"
"The Robe" (Douglas)
"Robinson Crusoe" (Defoe)
"See Here, Private Hargrove!" (Hargrove)
"The Story of the Bible" (Hurlbut)
"Tom Sawyer" (Twain)
"Treasure Island" (Stevenson)
"A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" (Smith)
"Uncle Tom's Cabin" (Stowe)

WHEN CROWN PUBLISHERS signed a contract for an anthology of the law in literature, an eager young editor conceived the notion of tacking on the legend "Edited by Amicus Curiae." An even more eager publicity department lass at the Book-of-the-Month Club called up Crown to ask for a glossy photograph of "Mr. Curiae." . . . Betty Smith's new novel, "Tomorrow Will Be Better," will be published by Harper's on August 18, the fifth anniversary of the appearance of her previous effort. Its name, in case you get those Smith girls all mixed up, was "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn." . . . James Stevens, best known for books about Paul Bunyan and his fabulous blue ox, Babe, will have a novel of the Northwest on the early fall Doubleday list. Title: "Big Jim Turner." . . . Two of the junior editors on the staff of *Good Housekeeping* magazine are children of famous authors: John P. Marquand, Jr., is the son of Boston's outstanding living novelist, and Janet Graham is the daughter of England's Jan Struther, best known here for "Mrs. Miniver." . . . K. S. Giniger, Prentice-Hall's irrepressible publicity director, swears that a man with a strange, brooding look, the sort you Karloff at first sight, entered the stock room and fixed a beady eye on the foreman. Suddenly the foreman went into a trance. When he came to, the visitor and sixteen copies of Robert W. Marks's "The Story of Hypnotism" were missing. . . .

FEIKE FEIKEMA'S NEW novel, "The Chokecherry Tree," is completed, and now he is immersed in a study of the poetry of Charles Doughty. "People here know Doughty only for his 'Arabia Deserta,'" writes Feikema, "and no one seems to have read his poetry. Yet I solemnly declare that he is as great as Shakespeare, and in one work Shakespeare doesn't match him: he is as great as Homer and Dante and Goethe. Sometimes I am on the point of deciding to keep this all to myself, for fear of being committed. But how can one keep such a wonderful discovery to one's self? It's impossible. Impossible. Bernard Shaw agrees with me. In the postscript to a new edition of 'Back to Methuselah,' he lists three great literary titans: Doughty, Shakespeare, and, of course, himself, and declares 'When Doughty came home from Arabia, he spent the rest of his life in writing immense prophetic epics in blank verse of a Himalayan magnificence and natural eminence that would have made Milton gasp. . . .' Someday, promises Feikma, when I know Doughty better and get some time, I'm going to write about his poetry at greater length." . . .

JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON, of the *San Francisco Chronicle,* is authority for the statement that dachshund Fritz Newbegin, who resides at 358 Post Street, is undoubtedly the readin'est pooch in the State of California, and sends the accompanying photograph as corroborative evidence. It seems that Fritz, with only nominal assistance from his owner John (who also owns a bookstore), has become a full-fledged member of every book club in the country, reckoning that what with free books for joining, free bonus books at regular intervals, and a cut rate on books actually bought, he can get his reading matter cheaper from the book clubs than owner John can at wholesale. Book-club officials, however, insist that Fritz is barking up the wrong free. . . . Jim Nourse, son of Floyd Nourse, has been out in the tall timber selling Oscar Lewis's "The Silver Kings" for Knopf. His biggest order—250 copies—came from no regular bookstore, but from the Bucket of Blood Saloon in Virginia City. . . . Albert Idell's "The Great Blizzard" (Holt) tells a rollicking story of the two-day snowstorm that paralyzed New York traffic in 1888. Long Island commuters who tried to get home in the blizzard of December 26, 1947, however, now regard that '88 affair as a flurry. . . .

RALPH WOODS OVERHEARD a lady in the book department of Stern's ask a clerk about a volume called "Twenty



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THE FAMILIAR LITTLE tune of "Happy Birthday to You" is not heard as often as it used to be in stage productions or on the screen. Producers have learned to their astonishment that it is still very much in copyright, and that an alert lawyer, Samuel Mann, is on the job to track down all infringements. The lyrics were written by Patty Hill, and the music by her sister Mildred, in 1893, when the two of them were conducting a kindergarten in Louisville, Ky. The copyright was renewed in 1921. Every time a café orchestra serenades a customer with "Happy Birthday to You," while the celebrant's friends applaud, and wax from the candles on the cake drips on his best blue serge, ASCAP collects gold for those Hills. Attorney Mann got after Western Union, too. He told Bert McCord, of the *Herald Tribune,* that the reason they dropped the song as a singing telegram some time ago was because "they just got tired of paying royalties."

BENNETT CERF.

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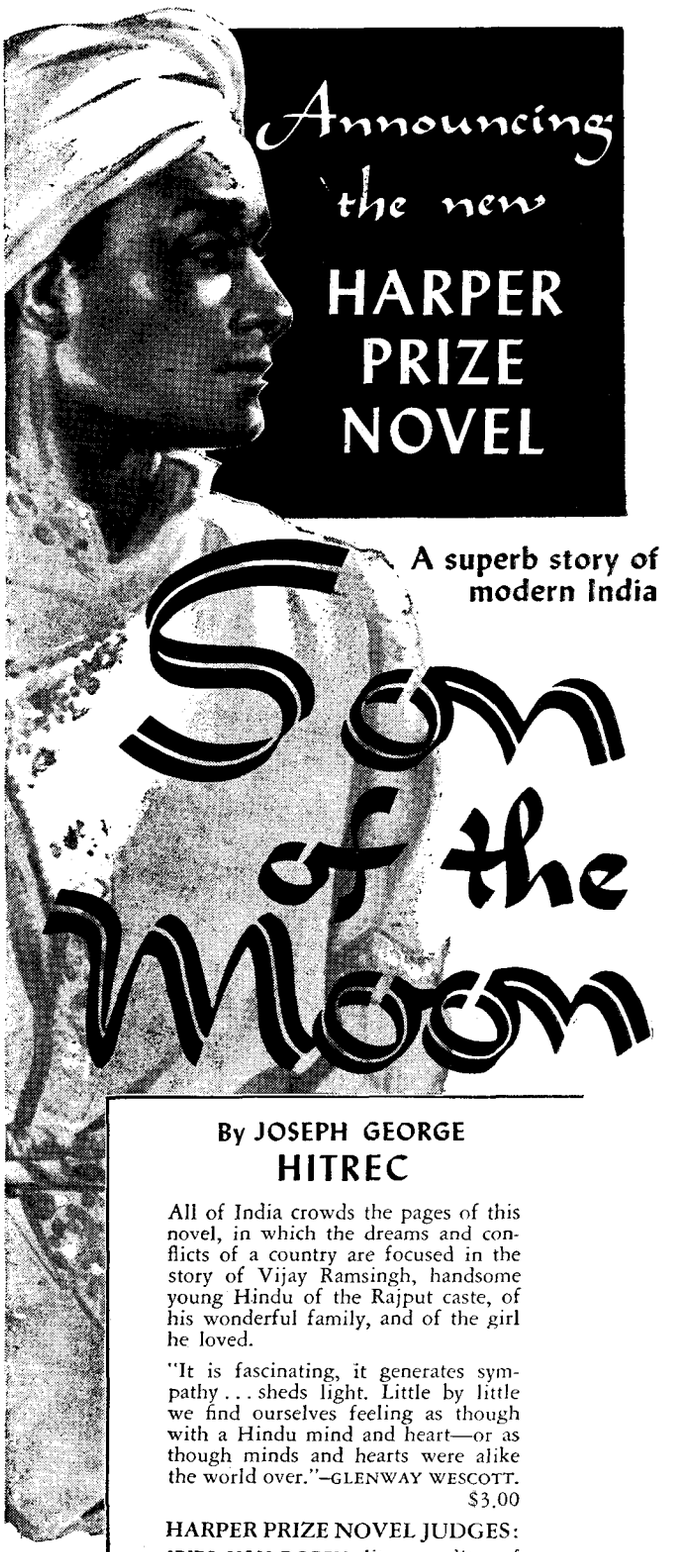

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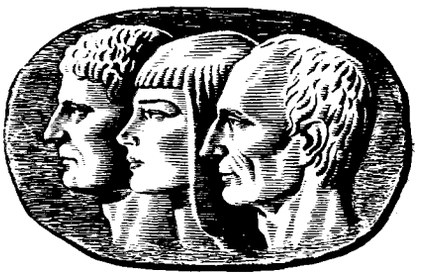

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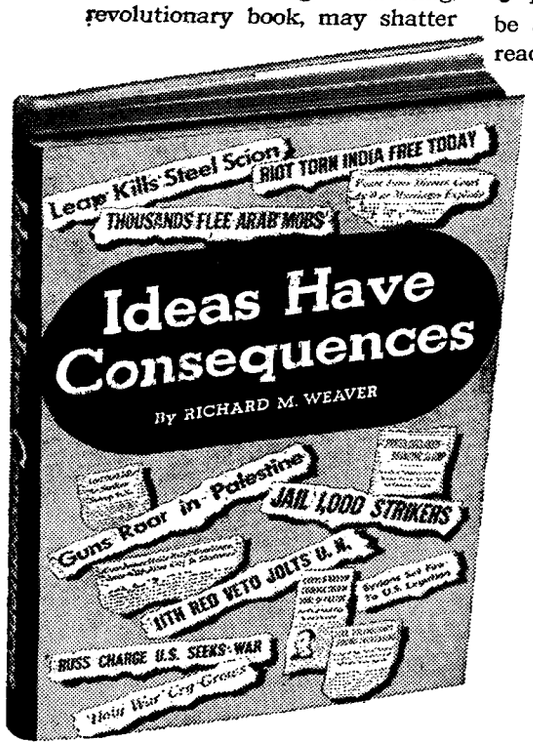
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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Poet and the General

Carl Sandburg Meets General Eisenhower

DUNCAN EMRICH

CARL SANDBURG, who brought himself up by the bootstraps from a dishwasher in Denver's Windsor Hotel to become the nation's leading authority on Lincoln, looks at the American scene with clear eyes. He has listened to the land and the people, and has studied and watched the United States through political upheaval, economic uproar, war, and natural disasters. He has also probed into the quiet heart of America and come up with folk songs, the smell of autumn smoke in small towns, and the sound of carnivals and country fairs.

In Washington, between trains on his way to North Carolina and his home from New York, he likes to chin with the Librarian of Congress, Luther Evans. Dr. Evans is a Texan and accustomed to looking at big country. He is as direct as the Southwest and the two men travel up and down the land in their talk. On a recent visit they got around to discussing men of stature, men who were the living embodiment of American tradition. Dr. Evans asked Sandburg whom he placed at the top of the list.

"Eisenhower."

Sandburg, it developed, had never met his number one American. Dr. Evans asked me to arrange a talk between the two and, in SHAEF parlance, it was "laid on" for 10 A.M., Friday, July 25, 1947, in the General's office at the Pentagon. That night, too, the Lincoln papers were opened at the Library of Congress. It was a double-barreled day.

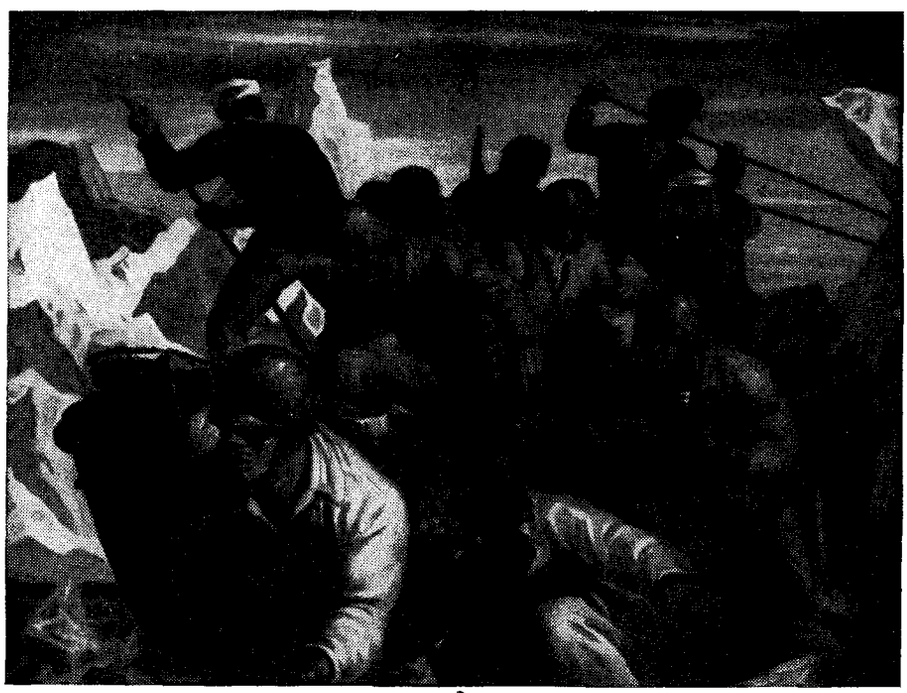
Sandburg, who generally carries on until two, three, and four in the morning, almost never considers sunrise appointments. Anything before 11:30 crowds him. When I picked him up at his nephew's in Northwest Washington, he remarked that he had given considerable thought to his morning engagement. "I even considered asking to have it postponed. But," with a grin, "I figured that I could make this one effort—to meet the man who commanded the Normandy invasion."

As it was, after driving along the Potomac and crossing into Virginia we arrived at the Pentagon, complete with guitar, twenty minutes late. The guitar is as much Sandburg as his shock of white hair. The spruce aides, with their last-minute haircuts and spit-and-polish, looked momentarily askance at the troubador-poet, but poker-faced military training plus the human warmth which General Ike insists upon in his headquarters both stood them in good stead. They introduced themselves and Sandburg, with breakfast egg on his tie and guitar in hand, was ushered in to the General.

The gist of the memorable conversation between these two great Americans I give now as accurately as memory serves me.

I had expected that Sandburg, having been greeted cordially by the General, would, as I did, take a comfortable chair for informal conversation. He did not. For perhaps the first ten minutes he stood at one end of the General's desk, looking down at him as they talked. For a moment I thought that this was showmanship. I was never more wrong. It was Carl Sandburg's way of expressing—not homage or obeisance—but his belief in the human dignity of a great soldier. Another American for whom Sandburg would have done the same thing—Abraham Lincoln.

SANDBURG began by telling General Eisenhower how he had been drawn into his orbit. "There were a lot of generals in the war. As far as I was concerned you were just another one. Then things began to move smoothly all along the line in Africa and Europe, and I began to pay more attention. I saw teamwork. I began to read your press reports and then your



—"*Coast Guard Commando Raid in Greenland*," by Norman Millet Thomas, U.S.C.G.

"The most important thing is how an army feels . . . the spirit that moves it . . ."

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—Fitzpatrick.

"The guitar is as much Sandburg as his shock of white hair."

speeches. I knew then that you were not just another general, and that there was a man here."

Eisenhower, who is as modest and selfless as they come, found this rough sledding and passed it off with a remark about the favorable press which had been given him. Sandburg pointed out that this was not by accident or happenstance, since in the whole history of American warfare no general had been as free of criticism as Eisenhower and his subordinates. Eisenhower said that where the members of the press are treated as fellow human beings with a job to do, and where information—within the bounds of military security—is given to them freely they are most cooperative and report honestly. "If reporters at any time feel that you are a stuffed shirt, that's the time to watch out. There's nothing a reporter enjoys more than poking into a stuffed shirt. And I can't blame them." He smiled as though it were a sport he enjoyed himself.

SANDBURG, speaking again in terms of America's past, noted that during the European compaign there were very few changes in command. "In all previous American wars, commanders of divisions, corps, and armies were removed and replaced with the frequency of battles." Eisenhower nodded agreement. "Once the men had arrived at the front, I think there were less than a dozen instances where commanders failed to measure up to their responsibilities."

"How do you account for that?"

"Careful selection of commanders, their excellent training, and the high morale of the Army. Morale was the chief factor. Which reminds me of the time I was studying military history. I had studied weapons—bows and arrows, muskets, guns—and had gone over battlefields and measured distances and location of forces, taken into consideration the terrain, the weather, surprise, and everything else conceivable in tactical warfare. Following this work I went into the jungles for three weeks with a ranking officer, an old Army man whose judgment I respected. He let me stew in my figures and tactics for two weeks. He had something to tell me, but he was going to break it to me gently. He didn't want the shock to kill me. Finally it came. He said, 'What have you been studying all this for?' I told him in order to understand campaigns and to win them. He replied, 'What you have been studying isn't the most important thing. The most important thing is how an army feels. What gives one army the will to win? Why does one army lose a battle which it should obviously win? Why is one army nervous at any rumor? The most important thing that you can study is the will of the army, the spirit that moves it, the men who make it.' That was advice which I have never forgotten, and it partially at least accounts for the way we conducted ourselves in this war."

Eisenhower continued, "You know yourself, Mr. Sandburg, from your reading of history that the greatest boogeyman myth of warfare is the flank attack. Whenever a commander hears that the enemy is on his flank, he becomes nervous. The whole army grows nervous. And if the enemy is reported in the rear, there is near panic—even if confirmed reports locate only twenty men. And yet a seasoned, confident army has little or nothing to be concerned about. A calm commander can take advantage of an enemy's flank attack and bring disaster to him. But he cannot do it with a nervous, jittery army. The morale of the army must be high and the confidence in the commanders high."

As I listened to the General talking, I remembered his Order of the Day to the armies at the time of the German breakthrough in the Ardennes. "By rushing out from his fixed defenses the enemy may give us the chance to turn his great gamble into his worst defeat. . . . So I call upon every man of all the Allies to rise now to new heights of courage, of resolution, and of effort. Let everyone hold before him a single thought—to destroy the enemy on the ground, in the air, everywhere—destroy him! . . . United in this determination and with unshakable faith in the cause for which we fight, we will, with God's help, go forward to our greatest victory." I remembered the men of his armies reading that and the tremendous surge of confidence that flowed through them. This was it. This was the end.

Changing the subject, Sandburg asked General Eisenhower when he anticipated writing his book on the war. "They've all been after me to do one, but I'm not going to yet awhile. I don't know that I need to because the war has been so well documented."

TO A WRITER and reporter like Sandburg, this was rank heresy. "But there are things which you alone know."

"That is true. And I feel that when I do a book it will be the sort written entirely from memory. What I remember myself of the events may be useful. After I have written it alone from memory, then I will turn it over to a staff to document with footnotes to their heart's content. The main body of it will be direct, simple, and from memory. And yet even there, how can an individual trust completely to his memory? Can you swear that an idea which occurred to you a month ago was actually your own? I may believe honestly enough that an idea did first occur to me, but actually the germ of that idea, even the idea itself, may have come casually from someone else in a staff discussion or an evening's conversation. I should have to qualify the book on that score."

Sandburg then asked how General

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Eisenhower looked forward to his work as President of Columbia University. He answered simply, "I approach that with great diffidence. I am not a scholar."

We inevitably turned to the subject of the Presidency of the United States. There was no mention of party. The General made it quite clear, however, that he was not interested in a political career. We felt that he had fully considered the matter and made his decision, binding upon himself for the time being at least. Whether his decision would be binding upon the people was another matter which was not discussed. And more from the manner of his speech than from the words themselves, Sandburg summed up the General's reasoning to me later. "The man has thought it out. He knows that his voice today carries weight in this country and abroad. He is fully respected for his integrity. No one can level any partisan criticism at him. And we badly need men like that. But as soon as he steps into the political ring, currents of hate and prejudice are stirred up which no man can escape. This man has more than know-how and surface sagacity. He has deep wisdom. He has seen what has happened to other people and has learned from them."

Human anecdotes studded General Eisenhower's reminiscences of the European campaign, and individuals seemed to rank in importance with the historic decisions by which history knows the war. Of the Normandy invasion, the most difficult decision was not the inevitable one which sent our whole armada, armies, and air forces into action, but that part of it which committed the American airborne divisions on the Cherbourg Peninsula. "Leigh-Mallory, British head of the Air Staff at Headquarters, had advised against it from the beginning, a good example of our completely Allied thinking. As the day for the invasion drew near, he came to me personally and begged me not to send the men to what he felt was certain death. He estimated that ninety per cent of the men would be killed dropping into strongly held territory. I felt, however, that the airborne drop was a keystone upon which the success of the whole landing depended. He presented his views and I respected them, but I told him that the final decision was mine and that the attack would go through as planned. He left me then but returned again. The man's conscience troubled him. He felt that I was committing murder. And if the attack had not been successful, I would have been a murderer. I couldn't have looked my staff or America in the eye afterwards if

(*Continued on page* 45)

Chinese for Poets

JEREMY INGALLS

THE resources of Chinese poetry are vast. Chinese critical comment on their own poets is also vast. James Legge earlier, even Arthur Waley now, have not been able, in the limitations of a lifetime, sufficiently to appraise the particular Chinese (and Japanese) exegesis on which they have chosen to depend. Other current translations have been shaped by the perceptions and blind spots of collaborating Chinese interpreters over whom the Western "translator" has seldom been equipped to exercise trained counter-criticism. Many English translations, further, are translations of translations, from Chinese through Latin, German, or French. If Chinese poetry is to be seriously incorporated into a more generous concept of the humanities, several more Western poets who are also scholars will need to build on accumulating but still inadequate Oriental studies toward interpretation of Chinese poetry in the West.

The changes in both Chinese and Western poetry through 3,000 years are mutually illuminating. The Western period of the Homeric hymns, of Hesiod, Alcaeus, and Sappho is contemporaneous with the Chinese poetry classic, sometimes called "The Book of Odes" or "The Book of Songs." The highly finished lyric, the work of the cultivated poet sophisticated in his art, the occasional didacticism, the social criticism, the details of agriculture and war are not unlike. But a major difference in psychology, affecting the poet's tropes, is already evident.

That a period in which the poet found a language for experience through projection of persons and objects into supernormal and supernatural agents existed among the Chou people is dimly apparent in the dynastic odes which occupy about a third of the present poetry classic. Dance-dramas with religious-historical themes have also left echoes in poem fragments and prose allusions of the late Chou period. But personages such as Hou Chi, Tan-fu, and the lady of Chiang do not dominate the Chou poet's method. Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, as projections of social and psychological reality, are essential language to the Greek poet; likewise, earlier and later, Brahma, Vishnu, Sarasvati to the Sanskrit poet, and the Dagda and Badb to the Celtic poet. From Homer to Aeschylus to Shakespeare to Goethe a symbolism of the projected personality, Odysseus, Prometheus, Hamlet, Faust, is the Western poet's particular economy and device for expressing the essence of experience.

In the earliest surviving Chinese poetry, even within the dynastic odes, neither the persons speaking nor those spoken about are sharply individualized. The Western poet's tropes operating in a nexus of gods, myths, characters at once individual and symbolic, express a psychology projected through a history. The Chou poet's tropes, equally conventional, of trees, flowers, animals, fish express an absorption in immediacy. Western time is, in the first millennium B.C., already a projection of an infinite future out of an infinite past. Chinese time, in this same millennium, is an infinite repetition within the frame of the seasons of the year.

By his methods of instruction in the Chinese humanities Confucius canonized, so to speak, this old Chou poetry. In so doing he unintentionally opened the way for the later Chinese fashion of allegorizing the old Chou materials. His own inclination toward heroes as a frame of reference, his idealization of Yao and Shun, of the Duke of Chou and Kings Wên and Wu, his habit of stating the present in terms of the past may have been, as he thought, a return to a more venerable world view or may have sprung solely from his troubled times, such times as often provoke projection into the past as a resource and solace.

Within the century after Confucius's death a further language of the imagination had penetrated the poet's vocabulary. It spread from the half-Tai people of Ch'u, south among the loosely federated states whose struggles preceded the first Chinese empire. The poet Ch'ü Yuan and his associates

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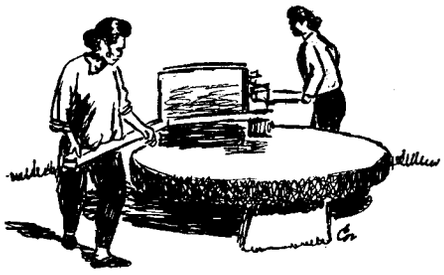
in this region well south of the Yellow River brought a new mythology of hovering spirits and sorcerers to blend with their Chinese hero world of the Yellow Emperor and Yao and Shun.

During this same period the Greek fantasy-world and the North African fantasy-world were altering the resources preparing for the Roman poet. And not only the dream-world of Ch'u but also the poetry of an un-Chinese Northwest, both drifting into the "international" metropolitan culture of the seaboard state of Ch'i, the extending geography and science as the Chinese states became one state and reached beyond their old borders, brought the far and strange in space, as well as the historically distant in time, into the Chinese poet's baggage. The ornate and euphuistic poetry of Han (206 B.C.—A.D. 221) is a far pendulum swing from the economy of the Chou poet. And the verse itself splayed into a longer line borrowed from the stanzas of the non-Chinese Northwest.

The Christian world-view with its Hebrew roots, the Celtic fantasy-world, verse forms from Goth and Celt further altered the content and shape of Western poetry. The poetry of late Han and post-Han times felt the impact of the Hellenistic-Buddhist world-view. As Chinese scholars ignored their Tai and Tartar cultural debts, so they ignored their Hellenistic and Indian debt—officially. Similarly the West ignored its multiple sources and remained, officially, descended from Troy and Greece and Rome.

In China the long narrative of contemporary life, the long rhymed histories flourished. Then appeared the highly personal philosophical poetry of T'ao Ch'ien (210—263) as different from both the euphuistic Han manner and the restrained elegance of the poetry classic as the concepts in the poetry of Boethius and Fortunatus are distant both from Ovid and Hesiod.

T'ao Ch'ien's frame of reference, his "language," remained a major way of speech among Chinese poets for the next sixteen centuries. It was only partially and not primarily derived from the Shang-Chou tradition. It rejected Confucian historicity and scholarship. It rejected also the popular poetry which was now adding the bodhisattva to creatures of the deserts and the isles and, to the old figures of Shang and Chou legend, the newer heroes of Han. By way of the more esoteric Taoism and the higher abstractions of Buddhism T'ao Ch'ien made him a language of country life, landscape, and wine. Since the Chinese poet, like all earlier poets, was untroubled by our consciousness of the changing nature of the planet, mountains and waters were acceptable



synonyms of the unchanging infinite. And the release in the wine cup became the outward and visible "word" for the process of disentanglement from time.

In the T'ang period Chinese culture reached a new equilibrium. New skills in compression among strict forms, new elegance in the older, freer forms provided stanzas for philosophic meditation, social criticism, personal and projected narrative, and lute song. The T'ang poet's favorite trope, the projection of immediate experience through the mask of events and personalities of the Han dynasty, was perfected to exploitation. Extraordinary facility and felicity in the ancient habit of the exact image transmuted landscape into complete metaphor for disentanglement and intensity. Among a thousand scintillating talents Tu Fu and Po Chu-i were adequate both to a Confucian this-worldliness and the language of withdrawal and meditation; their range of perception makes them most easily accessible to Western minds as they are also continuously respected by the Chinese. And Tu Fu for his maximum range, not only in sympathy but also in scholarship and skill, remains not only the greater of the two but the greatest of them all. Li Po, Wang Wei, Li Ho, Li Shang-yin are most typical of their time, adding an intricate historical scholarship to the poetic frame of

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

CLOSING LINES OF FAMOUS POEMS

Eleanor Peck, of Kenmore, N. Y., submits the last lines of twenty well-known poems by as many poets. Can you name the poets? Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 29.

1. And all night long we have not stirred,
   And yet God has not said a word!
2. And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
   Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!
3. The waters wild went o'er his child,
   And he was left lamenting.
4. A sadder and a wiser man
   He rose the morrow morn.
5. Then, as he placed another lock upon the shapely head,
   With a fearful shriek, he leaped and fell across the picture—dead.
6. And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
   Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!
7. The heathen Chinee is peculiar;—
   Which the same I am free to maintain.
8. And Christ ain't a-goin' to be too hard
   On a man that died for men.
9. They have left unstained what there they found,—
   Freedom to worship God.
10. The beadsman, after thousand aves told,
    For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.
11. For frantic boast and foolish word—
    Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!
12. Christ save us all from a death like this,
    On the reef of Norman's Woe!
13. And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
    And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.
14. He gained a world; he gave that world
    Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!"
15. At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
    Tomorrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.
16. And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
    Shall be lifted—nevermore!
17. And I to my pledged word am true,
    I shall not fail that rendezvous.
18. So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
    So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.
19. And when they buried him the little port
    Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.
20. The coward does it with a kiss,
    The brave man with a sword!

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reference tradition since T'ao Ch'ien.

The Sung poets, contemporaries of the troubadours of Europe, by their understandable adulation of a past fast slipping from them in the renewed onset of Tartar peoples, and their equally understandable desire for disentanglement, further refined the tradition of T'ao Ch'ien and the more typical poets of the T'ang. The mountains-and-waters language and the convention of quotations and historical reference came to stasis in an elegantly rigid "Chinese" poetry at the same time that Chu Hsi refined his inherited blend of Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist philosophy into what was to become an officially unalterable Chinese philosophy.

The love of the narrative and the hero burgeoned in the drum-songs, the Yuan dynasty plays, the Ming dynasty novels, in various not officially respected poets of the Ch'ing period. But these ways of speaking, for all their vigor of poetry, the scholar-poets considered beneath the honor of praise or comment. They did not perceive that the great eras of Chinese poetry had been exactly those eras when poets were least conscious of being categorically "Chinese." The greatest, because the freest, poetry sprang from the shuffle of cultures in the dissolving Chou dominion before Ch'in Shih Huang Ti created the first empire, from the period of conflicting states which produced T'ao Ch'ien, and last when, during the tenuous moments of the T'ang Asiatic peace, China still welcomed all winds from every border of her empire and from the Mediterranean, the Pacific, and the Indian Ocean.

Chinese poetry and Occidental poetry have had in common the allegorizing of history and the will to social criticism. They have had analogous symbols: for the West, the god-man and the idealized woman; for China, the divinely supported prince and the scholarly, wine-bibbing friend. They have had also analogous symbols of quest: for the West, the Odysseus voyage and the Grail search; for China, the King Mu travels and the "country beyond the Peach Blossom river."

If whatever happens lives present within or below consciousness, the mind does not lose the image or experience once recorded. In the close economy of metaphor in the lyrics of the ancient poetry classic the Chinese perfected a technique for expressing this immediacy released from history. And the masks of history from Han to Sung, existing also as simple parallels and not complex transformations, are also modes for expressing the continually present. In the poems which are entirely landscape and wine metaphor, the poet solved his problem of necessarily using the imagery of the world-in-time by transforming it into a complete symbol for existing within but not of the world-in-time.

Whatever happens also recedes as image and idea in the mind, forms new conjunctions, and returns as transmuted myth and symbol. Though past events, in one sense, remain fixed and immediate, they also transform and evolve as actually new events. This has been, until the twentieth century the primary language of Western poetry. Now T'ien Ch'ien or Ai Ching will remind you of Whitman; his immediacy of imagery and attitude, his drum rhythms make him readily accessible. But Yu Min-chuan, now aged thirty-three and deeply versed in his own heritage, also writes a poem called "Lady Macbeth."

The handling of trope in the old Kuo Feng songs of the poetry classic, the parallelisms of the T'ang *shih*, the compressions of the T'ang and Sung *ts'u* can provide additional resources for the English lyric even though the English poet must ignore various linguistic aspects of Chinese verse form even as he has to ignore the strict possibilities available, say, to the Italian in the use of *terza rima*. If the Western poet acquires access to the large body of historical and romantic narrative, he can find the Yellow Emperor and King Mu as useful as Odysseus or Faust. And the Chinese poet who has added the Western techniques of poetic projection to his present world-view may find in these same sources his richest hoard ready for mutation.

The Chinese poet has most often seen landscape in integration with persons. The West has most often seen landscape as the extension or opponent of persons. Each of these devices is a trope for approximating kinds of truth in human experience.

Jeremy Ingalls last year was a Chinese Cultural Fellow at the University of Chicago and has also been associate publications editor and research associate in Chinese with the University of Chicago. She is now resident poet at Rockford College, Ill.

On a Fire in a Ditch

(The Limitation of Teaching)

By Genevieve Taggard

IN SUBURBAN surfeit
Where my students study,
In a ditch beside a road,
A flame jigged, keen and ruddy.

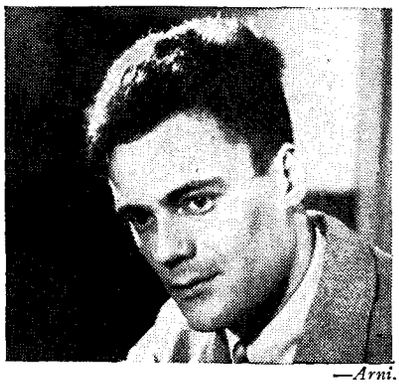
Litter and sticks afire
With topknot wisp of smoke,
Daunting and dinting me,
Blaze-jumping joke,

Forked, torn and gaudy . . .
Its slant substance caught
All my mind and half my eye
And taught me as I taught.

Erase the chalky board
With the eraser, rub . . .
(The fire itself, the fire
Out-bellies in the scrub . . .)

Phrases too often used,
Go blank or get again
The acanthus shape of fire
Imaged upon the pane.

The lesson waits or lags . . .
But O immediate burns
A moment of time in fire
Where no one learns.



—*Arni.*

My Current Reading

Robert Lowell, who provides us with a reading list this week, is one of America's most promising younger poets. In recognition of such work as "Lord Weary's Castle" (Harcourt), Lowell has received the Pulitzer Prize, a Guggenheim fellowship, and is currently consultant in poetry at the Library of Congress.

PATERSON, *by William Carlos Williams (New Directions)*

CANTOS, *by Ezra Pound (New Directions)*

CANTERBURY TALES, *by Geoffrey Chaucer*

WHAT ARE YEARS? *by Marianne Moore (Macmillan)*

SELECTED POEMS, *by John Crowe Ransom (Knopf)*

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES DURING THE ADMINISTRATIONS OF JEFFERSON AND MADISON, *by Henry Adams*

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARTIN VAN BUREN, *(Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1918, Vol. II)*

HARD TIMES, *by Charles Dickens*

THE AWKWARD AGE, *by Henry James*

PRINCE OF DARKNESS, *by J. F. Powers (Doubleday)*

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Poems of Greece

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In the fall of this year the firm of Boni & Gaer will publish a volume of Greek poetry translated by Rae Dalven. We are privileged to present here three poems from this collection which represent the spirit today of a great and often extremely misunderstood country. Miss Dalven supplies the following:*

"The best way to make known the Greek people to English speaking people is through the songs of the Greeks. For as the Greek poet Apostolos Melachrinos says in the introduction to his book 'Demotic Songs,' 'The Greek people is a people who felt more keenly than any other people the strength of the song. The song, like a magic power, kept the Greek people a nation for three thousand years. . . .'

"My anthology of 'Modern Greek Poetry' follows this demotic tradition down to the present day. The demotic tone of the book is set by ten popular songs which are then followed by representative selections from Dionysos Solomos, father of modern Greek poetry; Palamas, Mavilis, Malakassis, Kavafis, Sikelianos, Kazantzakis, Varnalis, Melachrinos, Krystallis, and others, down to the younger poets Seferis, Elytis, Ritsos, and Brettakos."

Marina of the Rocks

By Odysseus Elytis

YOU have a taste of storm on your lips—but where did you carry
The hard dream of stone and sea all through the day?
The eagle-carrying wind has stripped the hills
Stripped your desire down to the bone
And the pupils of your eyes took Chimera's baton
Tracing the memory with foam!
Where is the familiar ascent of the short September
On the red earth where you played looking downward
The deep bouquets of the other girls
At corners where your friends left you armsful of rosemary.

—But where did you carry
The hard dream of stone and sea all through the night
I told you to count its clear days in the unclothed water
To enjoy supine the dawn of things
Or else roam the yellow fields
With a trefoil of light on your breast, iambic heroine.

You have a taste of storm on your lips
And a red blood-like dress
Deep in the gold of summer
And the smell of hyacinths—but where did you roam
Descending shorewards the pebbly gulfs
Down there was a cold briny sea-weed
And further down a human bleeding sentiment
And astonished you opened your hands saying his name
Climbing lightly to the limpid deep
Where your own star-fish shone.

Listen, the word is the wisdom of the last
And time is a furious sculptor of men
And the sun stands over him, beast of hope
And you closer to it hug a love
With a bitter taste of storm on your lips.
It is not for you, azure to the bone, to count on another summer,
For the rivers to change their current
And carry you back to their mother
For you to kiss again other cherry trees
Or to ride on horseback to the mistral

Pillared to the rocks without a yesterday or tomorrow
To the dangers of rocks with the combing of the storm
You will say good-bye to your enigma.

Odysseus Elytis, pseudonym of Ulysses Alepoudelis, the son of a rich industrialist family, was born in Crete in 1912. *Strongly attracted to the surrealist movement, he has experimented widely in the use of images and words. Two volumes of verse have been published in Athens: "Orientations,"* 1940, *and "First Sun,"* 1943.

Boy with the Harmonica

By Nikephoros Brettakos

IT IS NO longer the machine gun will decide for liberty.
It is no longer tormenters who will suppress us.
It is not he who will come out to face you,
Boy of the wind with the harmonica!
Sidewalk statue blown by the mistral
Standing on one foot—whistling your nation's sorrows
With a brook-like voice, warbling from your heart,
Tiny heart of liberty, quivering like the morning star,
Boy of the wind with the harmonica!

Your blood embraced the pepper trees of the avenue.
Your blood became a bird and flew up to warble to us
Higher than the cypresses of Constitution Square!
Titiv, titsiou! Don't be afraid! Titiv, titsiou! Don't be afraid!

You became the bird and the almond tree, the star and the window,
Outlined by the lightning flashed on our door,
Embraced by death at night to force it open,
Naked, you pushed back the darkness! And we, what can we say to you!
Our heart cannot hold such immortal giddiness,
Boy of the wind with the harmonica!

Tell us poet of poets how we may sing your praises!
Comrade of our hope, tell us what to name you!
Tell us, because our lips suffer!
We do not want our words to fall on the ground!
We do not want to lose such a mission!
Else, better we had come out to be killed in battle!

Else, better we had sailed with the ships on the sea,
Than to steal the bread crumbs of the despairing
While you guard alone the narrow passes of night,
Purer than the love of Christ
For the daisies of the field
Boy of the wind with the harmonica!

I will go out to the field to gather the fallen leaves of the sun
To mould its rays—this summer
To mould its rays into leaves, to write down
The sky and your songs, Greek boy!
Because the soil is not enough! My blood is not enough!
Because my tears are not enough to mould my clay!
What can I do with my house! Outside they sing your praises!
Outside they speak of you! My voice is not enough!
I will run where I heard you say "No" to death!
I will run where you used to go whistling against

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I will run where you used to go whistling against
The thunderbolt! Against command and the sweet bread
of the earth
Against your own blue eyes created for love!

And I will shake down your sorrows from the pepper-
trees!
And I will gather your little voices! And I will cover
the Holy Altar
Of my poetry with your sackcloth shirt
And I will gather the wild flowers as though I raise your
flag
To plant it at the door of my country,
At the door of time and ships. As though I were raising
The Host of Greece from the asphalt,
Riddled with holes by the foe's bullets! To raise you
And set you on a bronze base. And you whistling
Standing on one foot—leaning your shoulder carefree
Beneath the little clouds of time
Right in Constitution Square!

How shall I see you! How shall I name you! How shall
I paint you,
Boy of the wind with the harmonica!

Nikephoros Brettakos was born in Levetsova, Sparta, in 1911. He attended high school in Gytheion, a port in the southern Peloponnese. Since 1930 he has been living in Athens, where the following books of his verse have been published: "Descending in the Silence of the Centuries," 1933, "Grimaces of Man," 1935, "The War," 1935, "The Letter of the Swan," 1937, "The Voyage of the Archangel," 1938, "Margarita," 1939, "The Peak of the Fire," 1940, "The Heroic Symphony," 1944, "33 days," 1945, "Fairy-Tale City," 1947. His prose works include: "The Naked Child," 1939, and "The Savage," 1945. The poem above is from "The Fairy-Tale City." Brettakos won the government poetry prize for 1940.

The Stygian Oath

By Anghelos Sikelianos

(This poem is one of eighteen of Sikelianos's "Akritan Songs" circulated through the underground during the German occupation of Greece.)

AND THOUGH I was like the migrating eagles,
Who can fly to India, Egypt, Greece
In the course of one spring,

And though sometimes my steps were
Like those of seamen who after sailing the ocean for years
Still feel its mountainous waves under their feet,

And though all at once, as if I had behind me the raven
of Acheron
Panting to reach me,—
All set to start
Ready to rush forth
Beyond all the closed rhythms of the world,
To ask for my share from the darkness
(the full creator's share);

Why then did I postpone the great step?

But now I say that you have opened the road for me,
Advancing with dancing steps in the dark,
My immortal warriors,
And that near you
The darkness of death is like the shadow
Of a large tree, where stretched out close,
We talked about Greece, as you saw her in that hour
When your eyes were closing on this world,
The world that was crumbling that she might arise
Illumined by the light of your soul,—
And that I speak with you,
My dead brothers of the mountain, the sea and the field,
For the molds of a new life that will come
In the light of your sacrifice, my brothers!

And again though I was like the migrating eagles
Who can fly over India, Egypt, Greece
In the course of one spring,

And though sometimes my steps were
Like those of seamen who after sailing the ocean for years
Still feel its mountainous waves under their feet

And if all at once
As if I had behind me the raven of Acheron
Panting to reach me,—
My strength all set,
I was ready to rush forth
Beyond all the closed rhythms of the world
To ask for my share from the darkness
(the full creator's share);

From now on I shall not leave your side,
Not for a moment would I leave your side.
I ask, for I have made a threshing floor
Of my heart, for you to dance on, my heroes,
And with eyelids closed, I watch you
Entering the mystic dancing floor of death
One by one, hand in hand
And I look at you with eyes closed
And I still crave, I still crave to look at you,
Immortal warriors, my brothers
Ever dancing the klephtiko and syrto
On my heart!

From now on I shall never leave your side
Even though all the stars
Ring out my share
(the full creator's share);

But here I leave my heart to you,
A mystic dancing-floor,
A huge funeral pyre of the dead,
At the same time a garden and a sanctuary
Until, dancing the klephtiko and syrto deep within it,
One day you too will break its chains
In one great beat of joy,
Your pulse
In a single rhythm of return,
Your dance
The eternal dance of Greece!

Anghelos Sikelianos was born in 1884, in Lefkas, one of the Ionian Islands of Greece. His poetical works include "The Prologue to Life," five small volumes revealing his "Consciousness of My Earth," "My Race," "Women," "Faith," "Personal Creation." "The Seer," a long autobiographical poem was written when he was nineteen. He wrote "Dedication," a poem of initiation, several tragedies, including "The Sibyl," several epics of major importance; "The Dithyramb of the Rose" (the last orphic Dithyramb); "The Mother of God" and "The Easter of the Greeks," embodying the whole epic of Christianity and several volumes of lyrics. In 1941-42 he wrote the "Akritan Songs." His latest drama is entitled "Christ in Rome." In addition to his poetry, he has written several prose works, including "The Delphic Idea," "Return to Our Deepest Historical Self." The idea of the Delphic movement was to establish an international and non-sectarian center on the site where, approximately three thousand years ago, the first League of Nations (The Amphictyonic Council) came into being.

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Poetry. *Annually* SRL *does its best by poetry, both through the large number of poems printed in one issue and by means of the volume of reviews. And during the year, its record in regard to the attention it gives to poetry is high. Many great men have attested that poetry is to be considered the highest form of writing, and so in a literary periodical this attention is altogether natural. Now, on the pages that follow, we examine books of poems by writers ranging from the late D. H. Lawrence to as interesting modern poets as Allen Tate, Muriel Rukeyser, Karl Shapiro, and Walter Benton. We contemplate also the poets of Academe (though they are certainly not academic!) Mark Van Doren and Theodore Spencer. Foreign poets—Rilke and Brecht—are likewise scrutinized. And you may discover a number of new aspects concerning a great and fertile medium presented to you in the pages following.*

A Poet's Responsibilities

TRIAL OF A POET. By Karl Shapiro. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947. 81 pp. $2.

ENGLISH PROSODY AND MODERN POETRY. By Karl Shapiro. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1947. 16 pp. 50c.

Reviewed by RAYMOND HOLDEN

THERE are moments in this painfully enlightened age when the study of poetry must seem a little like the study of sea-serpents, taken seriously by only a few credulous and slightly damaged persons and of no importance to the healthy and obedient citizen. Now and then a few watchers by the rail have reported full-grown specimens off the port or starboard bow but no specimen has as yet stayed with the ship long enough to be caught and stuffed. For the most part the average citizen believes that he may only learn of the genus from fossils.

This is not to say that there have, of late, been no observable poets, but rather that there has existed, through lack of sensible criticism, a dearth of nets with which to catch them. Karl Shapiro, whose latest volume is being considered here, seems to me to be someone likely to help bring the sea-serpent poet from his position as a by-line levity in journalism to the dignity of self-establishing news. Mr. Shapiro was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1946 to the accompaniment of a great many rather rare "Amens" from poets themselves. Unlike the true sea-serpent, he did not thereupon vanish into thin air, as his new volume clearly shows.

"Trial of a Poet" is a book of lyrics, followed by an interesting masque in which the responsibility of the man of creative intuition to his sense of poetry is the theme. Mr. Shapiro has had a good deal to say on this matter and what he says makes very good sense. Yet I feel that his presentation of the poet and the poet's function in this serious and carefully conceived poem is far less effective than his remarks on the poetic psyche in an excellent essay called "The Meaning of a Discarded Poem," recently published in a volume called "Poets at Work" at the instance of the Lockwood Memorial Library of the University of Buffalo. For one thing "The Trial of a Poet" seems to have been suggested to Mr. Shapiro by the recent unfortunate appearance in a world completely alien to him of Ezra Pound, yet the treason for which Mr. Shapiro's poet is on trial is quite different from Mr. Pound's. Mr. Shapiro seems to believe that the difference between a poet and a non-poet is a matter of kind rather than degree and that consequently the poet must always be at odds, to the point of being treasonable if necessary, with the nation of his rational fellow-beings. Few poets will disagree with this belief except perhaps to suggest to Mr. Shapiro, with St. Augustine's help, that the poet's stature as a prophet, whether manic or mantic, need not necessarily be undermined by exercise of that love, which comes of understanding, of the world in which he lives.

In making this comment on Mr. Shapiro's provocative masque I do not wish to overlook the supporting strength of the two lyrical and satirical sections which precede it. In these poems there is more than merely competent composition. There is evidence of a well-developed grammar of form and style, which constitutes the marriage-lines of a poet and his sense of poetry. Because Mr. Shapiro, more than most poets of great talent, knows what this grammar is and has schooled himself not to lose sight of it, he can afford to allow considerable scope to his subject matter. He can be tenderly emotional, savagely spiritual, and bitterly intellectual without apparently worrying over who is going to think him what.

It seems to me from his work so far (including an excellent, if brief study of the relationship of English prosody to modern poetry, given as a lecture at Johns Hopkins) that Mr. Shapiro has equipped himself to handle the dark matter at the roots of the tree of poetry and the metaphysical sap of the trunk and branches as well as the mystical flower and fruit. If his apparent assumption that the poet is, in large part, an anti-social madman does not keep him too far removed from compassionate experience of his world, I feel that he may turn out to be that rarest of all sea-serpents, a poet whose work will be more substantial, more valid, and more perfect twenty years from now than it is today.

Concord Country

By Norma Lay

INTO November morning
road swings blue, sun fresh
at over-shoulder line
lances car with light.
Lull of roadside pull-up
pulses with pattern of wires
in wind-high singing,
restores the day to its slender
ubiquitous ghost. *Thoreau!*
Thoreau!

Margins of Terror

THE GREEN WAVE. By Muriel Rukeyser. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1948. 95 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES R. CALDWELL

WRITING a poem is a way of bringing the universe into a satisfying order. Required is the fullest consciousness of the quality and value of the experience and its ramifications. There are of course other ways. Taking alcohol is one, but this entails a degree of distortion and carelessness, to achieve which we pay the pothouse at night and the piper next morning. Making love is another, but love involves a limiting, and ultimately a kind of suspension of consciousness. Awareness, evaluation, and arrangement are the integers of poetry.

The evaluations and arrangements of good poetry are, to a large extent, implicit rather than overt. They inhere in images, rhythms, counterpoints, tones, attitudes, statements, etc., all of which are in turn thor-

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oughly interdependent and interbound. In these media orders and values are directly apprehended; from these they cannot easily be separated. Nor can the variously intertwined media be abstracted without injury. That is why almost all criticism is superficial and most description inaccurate and why reviewing poetry is a rather desperate task. Miss Rukeyser's poetry is in this sense good. I can only begin to describe it and shall hardly avoid misrepresentation.

I will say that her arrangements are massive, rapid, and (in the original sense of the word) pathetic. Dark and heavy images move in light and quick rhythms; richly involved figures shape and succeed with a purposive turbulence, and the effect is one of rather terrible intensity. This hurry of masses, this agitation of great waves of image and rich concept beats indeed on the margins of fear and pain. That fear and pain should lurk in good poems of this bleak time is no wonder. Here they are audible in the line's beat. Also, they are plainly cited as a conscious impulse.

. . . out of pain
Turned to the personal, the pure release.

Miss Rukeyser's perceptions are personal and deep, but her subjects common. She writes of now surrounding scenes, loves, predicaments. Her encounters with these, though at times described in the complex fractions of the inner mind, move outward. Her ultimate regard is to a public world. To it she proposes, whether in direct or oblique language, mainly more love, more courage, more life. Which is to say that despite an undertone of something near terror, these are positive poems

All of the testaments are in your favor.

Moreover they indicate no rigid commitment to a single level of perception. The wine chooses the bottle, and one poet sees different things in different lights.

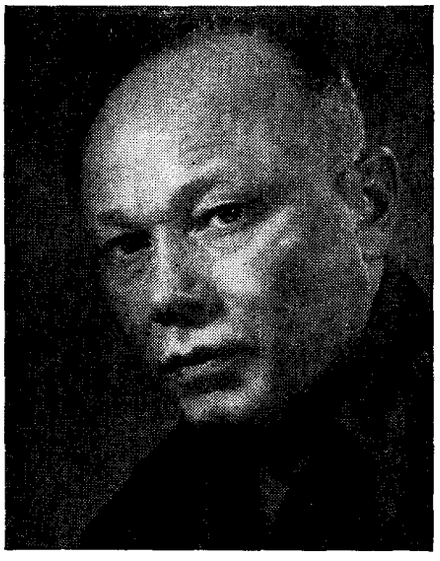
It is, in manifest content, a very various, even a slightly patchy volume. It includes, besides the twenty-one assorted poems of the first section, "translations" from the Mexican Octavio Paz, and from the blind Marquesan leper Moa Tetua, excerpts from plays, "Nine Poems for the Unborn Child," and some other groups. What unity there is, and it is enough for a book of poems, lies chiefly in the poet's way of feeling and saying. It is a distinguished way. I think I hear (with pleasure) faint echoes of Hopkins and Eliot. But these are the enriching overtones of a voice that is compelling and unique. These are passionately firm evaluations.

—*Udel Bros.*

Karl Shapiro . . . "tenderly emotional, savagely spiritual, bitterly intellectual."

—*Lotte Jacobi.*

Muriel Rukeyser . . . "more love, more courage, more life."



—*Robin Carson.*

Walter Benton . . . acute sensory perceptions, grotesque revelations.

Articulate Passion

NEVER A GREATER NEED. By Walter Benton. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1948. 62 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by MARTHA BACON

WALTER BENTON has followed his highly explicit first book of verse, "This Is my Beloved," with another equally articulate expression of passion, "Never a Greater Need." But in spite of a superficial similarity between the two books, the reader will discover some wide and basic differences. In both collections, Mr. Benton has used a free metrical form which allows him the greatest possible latitude of expression, but in "Never a Greater Need" he has acquired more control of his idiom and has tightened his verse form, thereby bringing his images into clearer focus and restraining his language to the advantage of his poetry.

The first three sections of the book deal largely with a dramatic rediscovery of the erotic experience. In rising, falling, Biblical cadences the poet celebrates the renewal of passion, often in speech of great beauty. Then there is a change. He brings the sequence to a saddened conclusion, and the final poems are about the war. This last section seems to me to be extremely powerful. One could not fail of power perhaps in any discourse that included the names Belsen, Buchenwald, and Dachau, but the poem which takes these matters for its province evokes the horror of the veritable image.

Mr. Benton is a writer who has gone through life with such acute sensory perceptions that his revelations can be grotesque. He overwhelms one with graphic detail, but he is nonetheless truthful for this, and certainly he is an artist. At his highest standard his work is beautiful. I have in mind especially the poem entitled "Summary of the Distance Between the Diving Bomber and the Objective."

The electric key poised to unlock the
plutonium vaults of fire!

Beautiful . . . beautiful to see against
the sky of flying birds—
against the soft, wide, lavender eyes
of morning!

There, proud physicist, beauty enamored poet,
miracle credulous priest . . . behold.

This poem rings authentically for me, and the last poem in the book, "Lines for Anyone," is a finely stated and moving confession of need and longing, not the less universal because it is so completely personal.

One cannot read a book of this kind without pondering the problems of

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contemporary poetry. We recognize in Walter Benton's big periods and apparently amorphous combinations of syllables and cadences the huge, equivocal horizons that confront us in other fields. This sensual poetry, strewn all over the page, as it were, has a way of giving the reader a sense of utter formlessness and then it suddenly stiffens and clarifies, and we become aware of the evolution of poetic speech. Something direct and sharp is here. The tremendous act of creation is before us, and at times the very energy of the writer seems to destroy the thing created. But at other junctures, in the best work in this book, the selle is not o'er leapt and a complete and beautiful poem emerges, such as the two I have cited. And as all good poems must be, they are unique, but also they exist in relation to the English language and in fulfilment of the aims of poetry, which are visual, auditory, and human. Walter Benton says:

I can think of no moral . . . no prophecy to tell you.
I am a poet.

And of the truth of this declaration there can be no question.

Two Poems

By Robinson Jeffers

What Of It?

LIFE'S norm is lost: no doubt it is put away with Plato's
Weights and measures in the deep mind of God,
To find reincarnation after due time and their own deformities
Have killed the monsters: but for this moment
The monsters possess the world. Look: forty thousand men's labor and a navy of ships, to spring a squib
Over Bikini lagoon.

Nobler than man or beast my sea-mountains
Pillar the cloud-sky; the beautiful waters in the deep gorges,
Ventana Creek and the Sur Rivers, Mal Paso Creek, Soberanes, Garapatas, Palo Colorado,
Flow, and the sacred hawks and the storms go over them. Man's fate is like Eastern fables, startling and dull,
The Thousand and One Nights, or the jabber of delirium:—what of it? What is not well? Man is not well? What of it?
He has had too many doctors, leaders and saviors: let him alone. It may be that bitter nature will cure him.

Original Sin

The man-brained and man-handed ground-ape, physically
The most repulsive of all hot-blooded animals
Up to that time of the world: they had dug a pitfall
And caught a mammoth, but how could their sticks and stones
Reach the life in that hide? They danced around the pit, shrieking
With ape excitement, flinging sharp flints in vain, and the stench of their bodies
Stained the white air of dawn; but presently one of them
Remembered the yellow dancer, wood-eating fire
That guards the cave-mouth: he ran and fetched him, and others
Gathered sticks at the wood's edge; they made a blaze
And pushed it into the pit, and they fed it high, around the mired sides
Of their huge prey. They watched the long hairy trunk
Waver over the stifle trumpeting pain,
And they were happy.

Meanwhile the intense color and nobility of sunrise,
Rose and gold and amber flowed up the sky. Wet rocks were shining, a little wind
Stirred the leaves of the forest and the marsh flag-flowers; the soft valley between the low hills
Became as beautiful as the sky; while in its midst, hour after hour, the happy hunters
Roasted their living meat slowly to death.

These are the people.
This is the human dawn. As for me, I would rather
Be a worm in a wild apple than a son of man.
But we are what we are, and we might remember
Not to hate any person, for all are vicious;
And not be astonished at any evil, all are deserved;
And not fear death, it is the only way to be cleansed.

Mystic & Matchmaker

LIFE OF THE VIRGIN MARY. By Rainer Maria Rilke. Translated by C. F. MacIntyre. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1947. 55 *pp.* $2.50.

SELECTED POEMS. By Bertolt Brecht. Translated by H. R. Hays. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1947. 179 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by GUSTAV DAVIDSON

IT IS difficult to imagine two German poets who present greater contrasts in outlook, content, and style than Rainer Maria Rilke and Bertolt Brecht, particularly as they reveal themselves in the two volumes under consideration—Rilke's "Life of the Virgin Mary," a cycle of thirteen lyrics composed in 1900, and Brecht's "Selected Poems," a 179-page assemblage of songs, ballads, and dramatic excerpts written during the war years. Both books contain the original German with the English equivalents on facing pages.

Rilke, dead these twenty years, is still the "unseizable" mystic yearning for ultimate revelation. His poetry embraces "all the struggles, acceptances, compromises, and surrenders of mankind." Brecht, a political exile who has made his home in California since 1941, is the voice of social protest, the "apostle of reaction against individualism," the Marxist matchmaker who has joined literature and politics in a union which, despite all the blessings of fellow travelers, has proved incompatible.

Some eight or nine years back, Alfred Perles declared that "any attempt at translating Rilke is an arrogance, almost an obscenity." Yet translations have continued without letup, most of them bearing out Perles's admonition. The exception is C. F. MacIntyre. He has managed to avoid the pitfalls of both the apologist and the idolator. He has conveyed the essentiality of Rilke, his limitless light, his questing spirit, his Orphic song. In the present instance MacIntyre has, in addition, resurrected a group of poems about which, curiously enough, almost nothing has been heard this side of the Atlantic. These "Marienleben" lyrics, composed to illustrate sketches by one Heinrich Vögler, first appeared in Leipzig in 1913 over the Insel-Verlag imprint. There have been no previous versions published in America. In 1922 an English metrical translation by G. L. Barrett was brought out in Wurzburg.

Mr. MacIntyre, being a poet himself and a scholar equally fluent in German and English, is ideally suited

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to re-create in our own tongue the work of that "inimitable sculptor of words." And in the transition hardly any loss has been suffered in rhythm, color, and *geist* of the original. Especially in the "Pietà," in "Of the Wedding at Cana," in "Consolation of Mary with the Resurrected Christ," and in "Of the Death of Mary" does the translator preserve the delicate outstreamings and innominable reaches of that haunted wanderer in the no-man's land of incantation and reality. In the present work Rilke reflects his obsession with religious subjects, an obsession he never shook off and which, coming to early flower in his "Book of Hours," was carried over into his last great sequence, "Duino Elegies." Occasionally MacIntyre nods, as in his recasting of:

Eine Nachbarin kam und klugte
und wusste nicht wie,/und der
Alte, vorsichtig, ging und verhielt
das Gemuhe/einer dunkelen Kuh.
Denn so war es noch nie.

into:

A neighbor came and played wise
but didn't know how./The old man
went and stopped the dark cow's
mooing,/thoughtfully. Such a night
never was till now.

It might be argued that Rilke himself was not too felicitous in the original. But how faithful and final are MacIntyre's renderings elsewhere, as in his recasting of these lines from "Consolation of Mary":

Und sie begannen
still wie die Bäume im Frühling,
unendlich zugleich,
diese Jahreszeit
ihres äussersten Umgangs.

into:

And they began,
silently as trees in spring,
infinitely together,
this season of their uttermost communion.

In the case of Brecht's "Selected Poems," H. R. Hays, the translator, was faced with a simpler task, for he deals here with no lyrist of cloudy symbols but with a class-conscious propagandist to whom matter is paramount, and whose manner, individualistic as it is, is custom-tailored to united fronts and party lines. Brecht uses poetry as a means, not an end. Whatever he says is preconditioned by his social or political convictions. These are sincere and forceful enough, but an honest passion does not always make a good poem. There is little here, in fact, that could not have been said more effectively in prose. Brecht's ballads are for the most part tracts, powerful as indictments of our time. They make their appeal directly from empty bellies to the sword. Some of them are lifted to song by flaming anger against injustice, by

Rainer Maria Rilke "probes the enigma of love, beauty, man, God, and eternity."

personal grief or shame or the memory of loss. The preoccupation however is largely with the unhappy, unhopeful, disintegrating side of life. There is no denying that Brecht has a case, but it is one-half of the picture; the other half is never shown. If there is any pity or love expressed here, it is, in the main, self-pity and self-love. To this bitter and disillusioned poet "all is lie and bluff," and Lenin alone is the prophet. His ballads of soldiers, workers, and unfortunates of every description are like revolutionary slogans in a death-to-the-enemy campaign.

Comrades, here's the place for you.
So fall in with the workers' united
front
For you are a worker, too.

Brecht laments only the lot of the proletarian, the soldier-comrade, the class hero. How differently, for example, Wallace Stevens: "Of all/The soldiers that have fallen, red in blood . . . the soldier of time, grown deathless in great size."

Few persons in America, apart from those who think like Brecht, will care much for this type of verse:

Slave, who is it who shall free you?
Those in deepest darkness lying,
Comrade, these alone can see you,
They alone can hear you crying.
Comrade, only slaves can free you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or
none.
One alone his lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or
none.

Rilke probes the enigma of love, beauty, man, God, and eternity. Brecht sees only economic oppression, social injustice, horror, futility. And this, as J. Donald Adams says, "is not good enough for our time." We are looking for "a literature of courage," not of defeat.

Poet-Prophet-Problem

SELECTED POEMS OF D. H. LAWRENCE. With an Introduction by Kenneth Rexroth. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions. 1948. 148 pp. $1.50.

Reviewed by JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER

D. H. LAWRENCE as poet, prophet, and problem has been thoroughly and variously dealt with in America by F. R. Leavis, Horace Gregory, William York Tindall, and Mabel Dodge Luhan, to name a few of the most outstanding commentators. On the question of the poems I feel there is little to add at the moment, except thanks for the handy format of the new selection lately printed by New Directions with an introduction by Kenneth Rexroth. On the jacket cover Mr. Rexroth's contribution is characterized as "revolutionary in its new and challenging insights," and it opens promisingly enough. But soon Mr. Rexroth, who apparently has indulged in a lot of promiscuous reading, culls from it to produce a brilliant-sounding essay that may serve to dazzle a few readers but does not succeed in casting further light on Lawrence and his problems, which were at once personal and symptomatic of the era.

In one statement, for instance, Mr. Rexroth links the malaise of Lawrence to the experience of St. Augustine, asserting that "the Confessions introduce a new sickness of the human mind, the most horrible pandemic and the most lethal ever to afflict man. Augustine did what silly literary boys in our day boast of doing. He invented a new derangement." To one reader, at least, such an unsubstantiated theory smacks as much of lunacy as heresy, especially coming in the same essay where, ignoring Sophocles and disputing Freud, he says of the Oedipus Complex that "before Augustine there was really nothing like it," and dismisses the idea of "sublimation" with the flippant parenthesis "(whatever YMCA evasion that may refer to)." There is in this, as in other of his pronouncements, the same kind of irresponsibility that amounts to frivolity.

Another instance of this kind of rash verbalism is the following: "All artistic conventions are a method of spiritual deficit-financing. If they were abandoned, the entire credit system of Poets, Ltd., would be thrown into helpless confusion. It is just as well that the professors have led the young, in my time, away from free verse to something that can be taught. No one could be taught to be a Lawrence. . . ." No, indeed, nor a Keats either, though the latter worked through the conven-

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My Current Reading

Robert Silliman Hillyer, distinguished writer and teacher, is best known for his polished, classical verse which won him a Pulitzer Prize in 1934. He has also published a number of novels, and some critical works, translations, and anthologies. Mr. Hillyer has been reading the following books:

THE GARRETSON CHRONICLE, *by Gerald Warner Brace (Norton)*

THE HOUSE OF MIST, *by Maria-Luisa Bombal (Farrar, Straus)*

GREEK PLAYS IN MODERN TRANSLATION, *edited by Dudley Fitts (Dial Press)*

SHORTER POEMS *(Enlarged Edition), by Robert Bridges (Oxford)*

LAND OF PROMISE: THE STORY OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY, *by Walter Havighurst (Macmillan)*

MONA LISA'S MUSTACHE, *by T. H. Robsjohn-Gibbings (Knopf)*

THE MEANING OF TREASON, *by Rebecca West (Viking)*

THE MYSTERIOUS SEA, *by Ferdinand C. Lane (Doubleday)*

A STUDY OF HISTORY, *by Arnold J. Toynbee (Oxford)*

STRANGE LIFE OF IVAN OSOKIN, *by P. D. Ouspensky (Holme Press)*

tion, even perfecting it, and the former broke only with the conventions immediately preceding his own time. Free verse was no complete novelty. Lack of space prevents further comment on such *bêtises,* but in spite of them, and in spite of the deplorable tendency to exalt Lawrence by denigrating poets like Hardy, Yeats, and Hopkins, who were certainly as good if not better than he, Rexroth points out again the excellencies in Lawrence's poems. The austerely noble "The Ship of Death, "and "The End, the Beginning" may actually "quietly preempt immortality," but not, certainly not, "Willy Wet Leg."

The question-mark that Lawrence put on our society is still valid today. Earlier, but just a little earlier than other writers, he put his finger on one very sore spot. He saw the antagonism growing between men and women. He knew that the natural union of man and woman in marriage is the basic unity on which that society was formed; that if marriage is threatened in its natural and conferred sanctities, the society is also threatened. But neither Lawrence, nor Rexroth his champion, nor anyone, has settled the primacy of the chicken and the egg. Did marriage become sick of itself and infect society or did a society, changing from a number of causes, press on and almost disintegrate the state of marriage? But that renovation might well start here, that a good society should logically develop from good conjugal unions, which in turn create good homes for children, raying out to good neighborly and communal relationships, etc., seems unarguable. Lawrence was finally able to adjust his sexual difficulties and make his relationship with Frieda emotionally as well as civily a marriage. I have always been convinced he suffered from not having a child, from not having the experience of fatherhood. I felt this on seeing him, even though, or because, it was never explicitly said in his writings, and felt, too, that the wound was lasting. But if he solved his problem, it was for himself alone, and a succession of Frieda Lawrences (even if conceivable) would hardly be the solution for others equally tortured. There is a darker side to the monumental self-confident femaleness of the Germania she typified: we have seen in the fruits of Nazidom where the cult of primitivity can lead. Our time is even a more confusing thing than Lawrence's, but of the world we know one thing that he did not: we cannot "lead it forward by leading it back."

String Quartet

By Babette Deutsch

WHO HAVE no heaven come
Into the room that passively receives
These fluttering chattering quotidian selves,
The grieving heart and the deceiving mind.
Then all recede, as who should bow before
The entering instruments.
They find their places,
And all is garden and is grace, is
Eden, animal and innocent.
The violins and the viola cradle restless chins,
The serious cello's blonde body glows,
How faithful are the dog-eared scores, and how
The bows lift, scenting music!
Now, softly as a flower,
Silence unfolds, and paradise
Begins.

Fingers prance on the strings,
Bows dance in air,
Time is undone even where time grows,
Blossoming like a tapestry's blue and rose,
Vanishing like its colors at day's close:
Blossoming, fading, vanishing, only to spring
Up as a fountain tossing a crystal ball
On the tips of the water's fingers.

They sigh, to watch it fall,
The impalpable sphere striped with day and night;
Will it roll away out of the hall,
Or tossed once more
Leap into the sky
And be lost?
Some, embarrassed, cough, or stir in their chairs.
Some stare
At the wall or the floor or the ceiling, some close their eyes.
Time is the hairs of a horse stroking the gut of a cat,
Time is a hole in the carpet, is dust on the lamp, is a cramp in the knee.
Time is nothing to see.
But what is this that from the hollow wood
Summons the son of the morning, radiant still,
Summons the daughters of music, not brought low?
What temporal marvel unmakes time, that now
Grief stands on the sheer brink
And does not shrink,
Love sees how vilely it must live
And smiles?

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"All Being Is on the Spin"

POEMS, 1940-1947. *By Theodore Spencer. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.* 1948. 117 *pp.* $2.75.

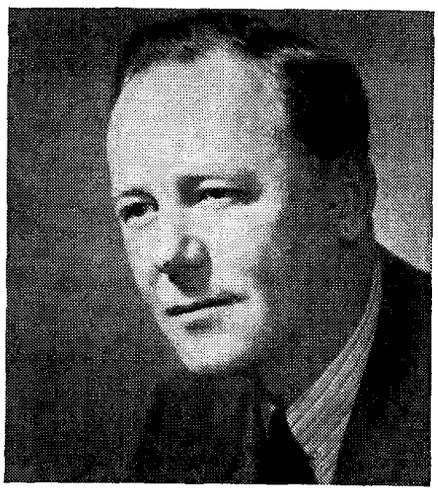
Reviewed by ROBERT HILLYER

THEODORE SPENCER'S poems are unified in philosophy, diverse in technique, and beautiful throughout.

The shorter poems include those published in two previous volumes, together with many later pieces. The title of the first group, "The Paradox in the Circle," is symbolic of the lyric impulse prevailing in these pages, wherein all being is pictured as rotating within a fixed law of change. Thus refrain and echo make an effective method of communication.

All being is on the spin. The rhythm swings around a circle back to the refrain and with new impetus starts out on another revolution. Each time it recurs, the refrain has accumulated new significance. The circular movement, like the magnetic swirl of the cosmos, picks up all things in its orbit and sweeps them along: children playing, gentlemen and ladies dancing, lovers and their songs, philosophers, and time itself.

The contemptuous "Epitaph" and elegiac "The Day" succumb momentarily to the lure of nihilism, but the more sustained thought is of the struggle of the individual against the barriers of Death. In "One Kind of Advice," the individual revolts against "cruel mind" itself, which summons the dark thoughts of change, and tries to escape through the door of the emotions. Yet when that door is opened, there is still only the frightening range of the prancing stars. But



—*Peter Rossiter.*

Theodore Spencer: "If the call comes, who answers?"

the whirl in the dark need not end in despair. There is the possibility that the hurrying circles, less confused than inexorable, will be arrested by the opening of another door into perpetual Light. But where? But when? Much of the power of the lyrics derives from these two questions that haunt the spirit of man. In "Joshua and the Suicide" the sudden stoppage of life's dizzy sun is a fearful jar. Now the questions have to be answered. And they cannot be answered. As the poet says later, in "Problem of Immortality":

> If the call comes, who answers?
> If the answer comes, who calls?

Among the longer poems the noble music of "The World in Your Hand" suggests the solutions for the questioning soul in the return to earthy simplicity, the mastery of oneself, and the consciousness of companionship. The poem is Tennysonian in its assured Quietism. The first poem in the book, "The Phoenix," is not free from philosophical doubt, but it concludes with an implication of faith in destiny—even individual destiny—beyond mere chance and change. It is, at least, a rift in pessimism, like the concluding lines of Thomas Hardy's "Darkling Thrush." Taking "The Phoenix" and "The World in Your Hand," it would seem that Theodore Spencer arranged his circling queries between two solid affirmations.

The exuberant ornamentation of "The Phoenix," as well as the symbol, suggests the Elizabethan muse, who is amiably present in the poet's background, especially in the many-voiced refrains, the statements, and echoes. The grave pastorals of Raleigh, Sidney, and Webster come to mind, and the love lyrics in the present volume would not be out of key in a program that included Campion and Fletcher. To be able to invoke such names in connection with a thoroughly modern book is a happy augury. These poems may have been composed in the study, but the windows were wide open to the sunlight and pageantry that we now behold.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 248

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 248 *will be found in the next issue.*

MAT GEEQ IKD K YEEL GEEQ,

KD GEEQD YE; KCL KD GEEQD

YE DAT ITCM.—DKQU.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 247

No human being, however great, or powerful, was ever so free as a fish.

J. RUSKIN

Wings of Intimation

NEW POEMS: By Mark Van Doren. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 1948. 135 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD GRIFFIN

IN A WAY that is quite his own, using sly suspensions, interjected words, and a kind of runic austerity, Mr. Van Doren in these poems explores phases of emotion, areas of speculation, as well as phenomena of nature and weather. With sharp insight he examines himself in relation to time but he shows equal wit in transfixing ordinary characters against the extraordinary backdrop of their relation to the universe. Ultrasensitive to metaphysical ironies, Mr. Van Doren even when concerned with the simplest things—a camp fire, a copper thread, the progress of snails—is always concerned with much more but that more is never ponderous: it remains the lightest wing of vast intimation. And yet for its very lightness the vision is the more haunting. That the minimum of means brings into being so much only adds to the wonder. It gives one pause—to touch on a matter of technique—that the simplest words placed one to another can be made to achieve huge adumbration. With conscious effort Mr. Van Doren not only restricts his vocabulary but confines his manner to a deceptive casualness, an informality that is never colloquial.

This delicacy, this resonance of tone,—it is not at all common to modern poetry. To equal it precisely one must go back, I think, to the seventeenth century, to Vaughan, Donne, and Herbert. Not that these poems seem in the least derivative. No, although thoroughly individual, one senses that their roots have been enriched by vast reading.

One finds here an advance over "The Seven Sleepers"; these poems are less abstract, more astringent, and yet no one poem is more beautiful than "Our Lady Peace."

Although this poet's subject matter always had breadth, throughout the years he has increased his power over the line and is now able to make the

(*Continued on page* 24)

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The Perils of Poetry

MUCH modern criticism of poetry, some little magazines, some new anthologies, have furnished me food for thought. I can understand much, but not all. It seems to me that certain modern critics are perilous to poetry. I take an example from the past. The astonishing rhetoric of the late Hart Crane left me much colder than it left the erstwhile Paul Rosenfeld or the extant Waldo Frank. Yet an article by the former, which I once read, I am sure, in *The New Republic*, plunged me into deeper obscurity concerning this fervid and fated poet than did his poems. And still, today, critics expel much vaporous and inconclusive language concerning poetry.

In reading such criticism, and the poetry, one finally finds oneself in a country of incertitude approaching nightmare; for everything, as you look at it, becomes, or is in process of becoming, something else. Every word, for instance, spreads ripples of connotation, and images blend into other images like the patterns of glass fragments in a twirled kaleidoscope. There is an exhilaration to this; but there is no rest for a mood. And then, too, there are perceptions, in serious long poems that I have read with entire seriousness, seemingly so sensitive that several rereadings fail to reveal what the whole thing is about. For example, R. P. Blackmur is a highly literate writer, but when, in a long modern poem, he speaks for a prisoner in the dock prior to sentence, we are never apprised of the charge, of the circumstances, or, indeed, of anything concrete. All that I gathered at last from the far too many words was the intimation that all of us human beings are really in the same boat and that nothing much can ever be done about it—a conclusion I have seen stated before with more memorable lines. It was all very elusive. And so often one finds, in such vaguely evocative poetry, that one is only thinking that one is thinking. Then there is another kind (that of Hart Crane and his followers) in which there is a constant cross-fertilization of epithet, where allusions and references, as shy in ambush as wild creatures, stare and vanish at a glance. When one becomes acclimated to this kind of writing, grammar, syntax, the precise meaning of words, the direct communication of ideas, are made fleeting misapprehensions. When a sad heart is called "the gymnast of inertia," and one hears that "orphic strings, sidereal phalanxes" leap and converge to "thine Everpresence, beyond time, / Like spears ensanguined of one tolling star / That bleeds infinity," one finds this rhetorically impressive; until, upon emerging from the trancelike dance, the mixture of metaphor falls like a heavily lutestringed sledge (or am I doing it myself now?), and the first quotation recedes into a contorted statement of the merely obvious. By that time one has hit the pipe just once too often!

On the other hand, in modern poetry's defense, this first verse from John Malcolm Brinnin's "Every Earthly Creature" is admirably exact and clear, though the poem thereafter wanders into rather too much of a muchness:

The shifty limpet on his rocky shore
Contrives a conch to make life possible,

And the unbelievable giraffe achieves
A dainty salad from the lissom tree;
Pretending he is flora in the pond,
A silly fish will emulate a frond
To trick the appetite that savors him;
A rabbit in the snow will do the same.

But since I am speaking of the perils of poetry, I must give citations, and I do so neither invidiously nor in order to hold modern poetry up to ridicule; but solely in the interest, as I conceive it, of better writing.

When a young poet whose work is often brilliant avers:

Trudging towards snowtime, I could weep for hours
To think of birds, the birds I leave behind.

I wonder at his unrecognition of bathos. And when another entreats:

Dear visionary, gloss the awkward guest
Abashed by plants and trees and foliage things . . .

I remember Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" as considerably more rugged by comparison. Yet when a rather swaggering ruggedness expresses itself in still another, whose work is considered in the modern forefront:

Thus in the classic sea
Southeast from Thessaly
The dynamited mermen washed ashore . . .

I take it up with the conjured ghost of old Michael Drayton, who "gets the idea" but expresses himself as mildly horrified. Also he ventures the correction that mermen likewise wash at the bottom of the sea.

In a new poet of parts, I find:

Last night I slept in the pits of a tongue.
The silver fish ran in and out of my special bindings . . .

while one who is perhaps our most salient playwright of the hour reminds us:

You know how the mad come into a room,
too boldly,
their eyes exploding on the air like roses . . .

One acclaimed a genius by a large coterie, produces:

There was no antelope on the balcony
And Thomas had not yet appeared
At the barred window above the precipice.

Obviously a mystery story, but no story follows. Any more than in

Seven was Rudie's number but the twist
Twirled him ninecircles down . . .

which I have just made up myself. Come to think of it, it's pretty good! In the parlance, "twist" is a woman, and twist is also of the wrist in shooting crap. The Dantesque descent (ninecircles written all as one word

(Continued on page 37)

Young Rawley*

By Bryher

ORINOCO,
sad river,
whispering a name—
"remember young Rawley?"

"If he be
one of the young thousands
who never came
from their journey
what is it to me?
Let him lie with his English memories
under the cannibal leaves,
we all die somewhere."

With humming-bird gentleness
the river dirges,
"forget if you will why they went,
forget young Rawley,
can the leaves alter my banks,
Man obliterate glory?"

*Sir Walter Raleigh's son was killed on the last expedition to Guiana. According to West Country tradition and most authorities, the name was pronounced, and often written, Rawley or Rawlegh.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Are We a Menace?

SIR: I regret the necessity of canceling our subscription. Obviously this periodical, excellent from a literary standpoint, is intended for, shall we say, "broadminded adults." No doubt the editors themselves would hesitate to put it in the hands of young girls of good families, entrusted to our care for Christian and moral, as well as secular education. We try to keep them as unsophisticated as possible in a world teeming with problems of adult life.

SISTER M. ROBERTENE, C.S.J.
Principal,
Saint Joseph's Academy.
Tucson, Ariz.

"Miracles"

SIR: I have been a C. S. Lewis fan ever since the "Screwtape Letters" twinkled out in our sombre sky. I bought "Miracles" and read it as a matter of course as soon as it came to the counters and found nothing in it to alter my estimate of the author's quality. But how startled and put about I was on reading T. V. Smith's review [*SRL* Jan. 31]! Now I find I have been credulous, in other words, a sort of fool, for Mr. Lewis, it appears, is only a sheep in wolf's clothing, a mere Christian fundamentalist, clever, Mr. Smith admits, but only by way of a sly "ingenuity" which leaves him "aghast."

Mr. Smith, scientific and modern, knows what he is about. Doubt, he says, is the start-off in the search for truth, and accordingly he has an a priori suspicion of miracles as such. (Lewis's subtle distinction between "miracles" and "miracle" may have escaped him.) One must concede him this because science has already exploded so many of them, instance eclipses of the sun or moon, once first-rate miracles but now entirely discredited. Mr. Lewis's overt and covert insinuations do not deceive him, the looseness of his thought fairly—I judge—nauseates him. But I seem to have been diddled; the overt and covert insinuations have bedeviled me; Mr. Lewis has apparently led me around by the nose. And I too am "aghast." Yet there is nothing to be said, I am sure. There is of course no argument to be sustained, indeed no answer to Mr. Smith's authoritative and pleasantly contemptuous disposal of Mr. Lewis's ideas. No doubt I shall go on reading Mr. Lewis from the erroneous habit I have got into but now a little sadly, with a wise smile. I shall try to learn to be scientific and modern. I shall search my heart narrowly lest some bits of Christian fundamentalism lurk in its dim corners to foul my intelligence —for, indeed, who wishes to be diddled?

ELLEN COIT ELLIOTT.
Stanford University, Calif.

SIR: I note the following statement in T. V. Smith's review of "Miracles":

> Doubt comes hard, and yet doubt alone can prove any adequate foundation for a faith that is both safe and sound.

Your reviewer sounds like one of Screwtape's more successful cases.

MARGARET KILKENNY.
Louisville, Ky.

"Well, if you don't *know* who was Vice President under Grant, just say so."

Subscription Radio Relief

SIR: Mr. Kaltenborn's article on subscription radio [*SRL* Jan. 31] is a hopeful relief. When do we start? Why not use the *SRL* offices as a reaction-catcher to Kaltenborn's suggestion?

J. DONALD JOHNSTON.
Keene, N. H.

The Pacifist Way

SIR: Howard Mumford Jones speaks truly: "War degrades" [*SRL* Feb. 21]. The major premise of our foreign policy is wrong, because "its major premise is fear." "Gandhi embodied the only practical check on violence the twentieth century has invented. . . . We admire Gandhi."

These words can have no logical meaning but pacifism—the renunciation of war by the nation and the individual, with all the risks this renunciation may involve.

"After Gandhi, there is only silence around the globe." Does this silence include *The Saturday Review*, Norman Cousins, and Howard Mumford Jones?

If not, why ignore the case for pacifism? There are men who represent Gandhi's principles in America, writers worthy of *The Saturday Review*, but the press is practically closed to them. It would surely be appropriate to publish the pacifist suggestion of a way out of the impasse which the *Review* has more than once brought before us.

JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

SIR: It would be well worth while to send a copy of Mr. Jones's article to each Congressman and to the members of the Cabinet and to the President; worth while if it were not for the fact that Mr. Jones's keen discernment would make little or no dent on the "practical" minds.

MARSHALL W. RAFFEL.
Urbana, Ill.

SIR: Howard Mumford Jones's article is one of the best things showing what is the matter with our cockeyed foreign policy that I have read for a long time. Aren't you having some reprints made. I could use 100 myself. Congratulations!

LEWIS REYNOLDS.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Belated Recognition

SIR: Your selection of "The Gallery" as 1947's best war novel [*SRL* Feb. 14] has given me such keen personal satisfaction that I am bound to let you know. This superb work had seemed to me the most underpraised, inadequately reviewed book of this or any other recent season. Moreover, *SRL* in its original review last summer, as well as in its article Feb. 14, incomprehensibly emphasized a minor element—the four-letter words—and appeared completely to overlook the real quality of the book, that is, its humanity.

Most of the postwar novels have seemed to me a series of bright, accurate photographs, to be viewed once with a certain degree of interest. "The Gallery" is like a collection of fine paintings; one comes back to look at them again and again. For their beautiful spirit of compassion enlarges the vision, deepens the understanding, and brings warmth to the heart.

MARIE WHITBECK CLARK.
Rochester, N. Y.

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(*Continued from page 21*)

keenest pronouncements. Of fire he says, "We are not lightly to extinguish that." Of the effects of time, "To be white bones in honey after hot fire."

Despite the skill with language the reader comes across an occasional ambiguity due less to verbal ellipsis than to an unwarrantable chamois-leap of thought. Here and there an end stanza that should clearly *taper off* is allowed vaguely to *trail off*, a fault of which the book itself may be accused, for it ends with a group of insignificant lullabies. A perfunctoriness mars the Emily Dickinson poem.

For the most part these poems give the impression—as all good art should—of having been completely expelled through the instrument. A finality adorns them. A counted width of words. In its strict limits each poem holds and imparts its distinctive grace.

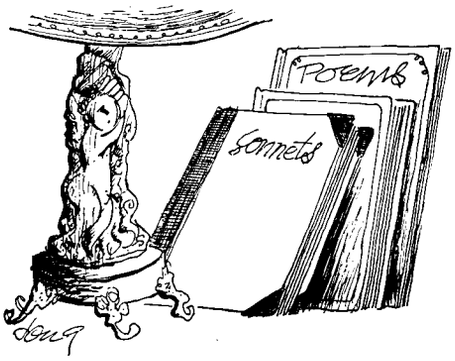
Lost Faith

POEMS 1922-1947. *By Allen Tate. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.* 1948. 208 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GERARD PREVIN MEYER

INCREASINGLY over the past quarter of a century, the name of Allen Tate has come to stand for a singular integrity of outlook. At all times he has given the impression of a poet who knows his own mind and intends to use it in his poetry. In consequence, he has been accused of a certain coldness; but hardly a line of Tate's is not informed by passionate sincerity, though it may be controlled by a fine irony or educed by emotions which many readers outside the South of his fathers find inexplicable.

In making the South, that "nation within a nation," a symbol, he provides for himself and "my few readers" "a local habitation and a name" upon which to focus the sense of loss—loss of tradition in society, loss of faith in religion, loss of a convention in literature. But Tate is enough of a determinist or fatalist (though an enemy of naturalism) to feel that not much can be done about the situation, even in the field of politics. "One must have deep inside one's secret being," he wrote in that fine novel, "The Fathers," "a vast metaphor controlling all the rest: a belief in the innate evil of human nature, and the need to face that evil." It is Tate's view, stated in both poetry and prose writing (through the frequent violence of his rhetoric), that, having lost



our faith, we can only find it again by a violent effort: which, however, may destroy both us and those around us.

The vision of this impasse forces upon Tate the irony which crisps his style, which, among the later poems shows to excellent advantage in such openly satirical verse as this, from "Our Young Pro-Consuls of the Air":

In this bad time no part
The poet took, nor chance:
He studied Swift and Donne,
Ignored the Hun,
While with faint heart
Proust caused the fall of France.

Still as impressive in "Poems 1922-1947" as when they first appeared are those nearly perfect poems "Idiot," "Death of Little Boys," "The Last Days of Alice," "Shadow and Shade," "Mother and Son," "The Traveler," "Ditty," "The Wolves," "The Subway," "The Twelve," "The Cross," "Mr. Pope," "Ignis Fatuus," and "Emblems" (particularly I and II). Of the newer poems, "Seasons of the Soul" though uneven, has already made the greatest impact; this is its first appearance

Married Love

By Theodore Maynard

1.

THE JOYS we had are like two mirrors that throw
An image back and forth and back again:
For in receiving joy we joy bestow,
And joy confessed—oh, never such joy as then!
The body's pleasure is the very least
Of pleasure's complex parts; who make it all
Still have a good, but only as the beast
Mates as it munches fodder in its stall.

Ah, but in marriage, even as we exact
The uttermost farthing, as reward we press
Rubies in thanks for tower and temple sacked
In such sweet, stern remorseless tenderness:
At the same instant trampled in the dust,
And charioted as conquerors august.

2.

Passionate bodies men, and passionate hearts
Have women (so they say), but poets both.
Nay, passion experienced, the soul's dual parts
Of male and female swear their marriage troth.
Only the brute the biological
Function performs in pure simplicity;
On us there floods an intellectual
Light in the spasm—each to his degree.

Now is the wife known, now the husband known,
The essence reaching through the accident,
Thus making what was separate its own,
Fused and transmuted in the sacrament
That in the annihilating instant sees
And tastes of God in His eternities.

3.

Only could Love and Wisdom Infinite
And limitless Power have human love designed
To climax in an agony exquisite,
The broken body, the triumphant mind,
The shame that Eden's innocence restores,
The last abasement, ultimate of pride,
When in astounding joy the groom adores,
Abashed, the astounded joy he gives his bride.

But were that thunderbolt of bliss not given
Save as a flash, it could not be sustained,
Or earth-bound hearts would seek no further heaven,
Or deem that Eden glimpsed were thus regained,
Like those who in fallacious floods go down,
Drowning their sensual love before they drown.

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between book covers. I like best the second section of this poem, probably because it seems to bring me closest to the experience frozen in it. "The formal re-creation of art . . . freezes the experience," as Tate says of the "Ode to the Confederate Dead"—still, for all its half-disclosures, one of the remarkable poems of our century.

In Erin's Step-Tongue

THE COURSE OF IRISH VERSE IN ENGLISH. By Robert Farren. New York: Sheed & Ward. 1947. 171 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by ANN F. WOLFE

THE TRUE Irish poet is not one of John Bull's other rhymers. Even though he write in English, he has a racial tradition to follow in spirit and theme, a Gaelic prosody through which to Irishize the music and gait of his metres. Irish-born Goldsmith and MacNeice, writing in the English tradition, are not Irish poets. Robert Farren is, and he knows every aspect of Irish poetry.

In "The Course of Irish Verse" Mr. Farren surveys the poetry of the English-writing Irishmen who took over after the Gaelic order disintegrated. He traces the growth of their Irishness from eighteenth-century beginnings in English translations from the Gaelic and the English verse of anonymous hedge-schoolmasters. As he carries his subject on up to Colum, Stephens, F. R. Higgins, Clarke, and the other Irish poets of today, he treats not only the poets and translators who contributed to the development of Ireland's literary separatism, but those who should have and failed to. He lays emphasis on the phenomenal originality and metrical virtuosity of Mangan and the "total Irishness" of Higgins and Clarke.

Thomas Moore was the first important Irishman whose English verse sang Irishly. Influenced by traditional music, he wrote a few lyrics that were racial in mood and metrical pattern. In the "general body of his graceful, dainty, but un-Irish poetry" there was maturity and dignity, a break from the sentimentality of mock-Irish rhymes about dear little shamrocks and the convivial charms of whisky.

By the early nineteenth century native themes were setting "the track of the Gael" on the poetry of Ireland's step-language. The countryman's Catholicism as it conflicted with his belief in fairy magic found literary voice in John Keegan's folk-speech verse. In Ferguson and Allingham "country spiritism" integrated its rather other-worldly overtones with "the sweet, wild twist of Irish song."

Mangan, foremost of the English-writing poets before Yeats, had a racy instinct for lyrical eloquence and sensuous metre. His appreciation of Gaelic poetry was of inestimable value to the translation movement. Some of Mangan's—and Ireland's—best poems are his versions from the Irish.

With Yeats Irish literature crystallized into a movement. In analyzing the poetry of Yeats and his colleague, Mr. Farren does not lose sight of their vital public relations service in bringing Irish letters to the attention of the world.

"The Course of Irish Verse" is a key piece of literary criticism badly in need of an index. The author quotes generously and comments brilliantly, if not always temperately. In his Swiftian approach there is racial psychoanalysis. Some may find this Irishman unreasonable, but few unreadable.

Mr. Farren's poets stand or fall on literary nativeness. He is pretty hard on the "fine fellows" and "grandees" who left Ireland's pearly half-lights for "the false Italianate sunshine of English poetry." Neither *Zeitgeist* nor circumstance excuses "those vexatious

Robert Farren's dictum: "Dig Irish earth—or else."

Irishmen, cultural emigrés who went versioning the divers dialects of Europe and Asia while an older poetry than most wanted service at home." Famous heads roll at his dictum: dig Irish earth—or else.

Poetry and Physics

By Gordden Link

THERE is minuscule pause
at the junction of four dimensions
when the poem suspends itself in time and space
with abstract edges touching no ganglion's end
or thing or shadow of thinking.

At this infinitesimal delay
in the torrents of time
and the cataracts of curving space
that mate to spawn infinity,
the poem is ignorant of self or form
or destiny or pulse or sound.

It might emerge heroic
from this fractional log jam of history
as sermon or music or design or dream,
and only God who owes His being
Himself to this intricate phenomenon
can know how many poems
stipple our past disguised as symphonies
or steeples or religious revivals
or the staring skulls of dream upon the sands
that bury half-remembered races.

And this is well: if a poem survived
from every impulse man has had
to fossilize himself in song,
our heritage from history would be
mounds of memorial star-high and eternity-wide;
the topheavy world would stagger through the dark
uninhabited and cold and doomed
to never ending unawareness of man's capacity
for constructing nonconformist deities,
for translating tribal rhythms into a way of life,
for splitting hairs and infinitives and atoms.

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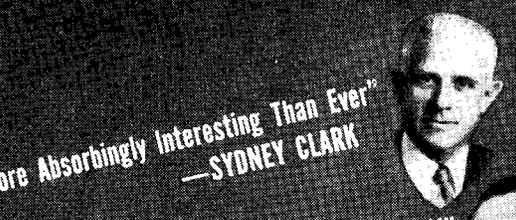

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Vibrant Originality

THE GOOD EUROPEAN. By Richard Blackmur. Cummington, Mass.: The Cummington Press. 1947. 40 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

IF IT WERE only for the third section of "Three Poems from a Text: Isaiah LXI: 1-3," an elegy called "A Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness," Mr. Blackmur's new book would be a contribution of signal importance to American poetry. As it happens, the elegy need not stand alone: there is nothing here that is not ponderable, and much that is as moving, philosophically (not, perhaps, so bitterly compelling), as that poem. The writing, not least in the two sets of epigrams, "Scarabs for the Living," is nervous, extraordinarily complex in texture, and urgent with a kind of religious New England cantankerousness that one has scarcely heard in contemporary verse since the too-early death of John Wheelwright—not that I mean to imply that Mr. Blackmur derives from Wheelwright (the debt, if it exists, must surely be reckoned the other way around), but that the vibrant originality of the one stirs memories of the other, *discordes concordantes*. A comparison of Mr. Blackmur's "Three Poems from a Text" with Wheelwright's elegy on Hart Crane, "Fish Food," will illustrate what I am getting at: no poems could be less alike, yet they both, with clean violence, exacerbate the memory of the dead and take the reader's imagination by surprise. I am saying, in short, that Mr. Blackmur, extraordinarily difficult though he can be, is a poet *sui generis;* and the *genus* is rare and important.

—From "Tim Murphy, Morgan Rifleman."

For the first time in my experience, I feel that I must comment on the typography of a book of verse. Mr. Victor Hammer's American Uncial is a strikingly beautiful font—it seems to be based largely on the Irish alphabet—, but it is extraordinarily hard to decipher. It is a question whether it is well suited to poems like Mr. Blackmur's, which demand undistracted attention. It is difficult enough to have to work one's way through the lines, weighing every word, without having the extra task of worrying over each letter as in reading a medieval manuscript. For once, typographical beauty clogs understanding.

A New Hero

TIM MURPHY, MORGAN RIFLEMAN AND OTHER BALLADS. By A. M. Sullivan. New York: The Declan X. McMullen Co., Inc. Illustrated by Howard S. Zoll. 1947. 219 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by MARTHA KELLER

NOT LONG ago my sister, returning to her Greenwich Village apartment with her arms full of books and bundles, found the doorway to her apartment house barricaded by a couple of orange crates and two small boys with cap pistols. The bundles were heavy, so she said, "Sorry, boys, but I just have to get through." The older boy, about eight, said, "That's all right, we have to scout for redskins anyway." The four-year-old added, "And the thmoke from the redthkinths' camp."

That incident should not only be proof enough that Daniel Boone and Davie Crockett, Kit Carson, and Sam Brady still survive—but should warm the heart of A. M. Sullivan who has just added a new hero to the great company of American scouts. And all of us who love Americana are much in debt to Mr. Sullivan for the addition. For his new book, "Tim Murphy, Morgan Rifleman and Other Ballads" tells the story of a most fascinating and energetic rifleman whose deeds were fully as memorable and remarkable as those of Boone himself, though less generally known. Mr. Sullivan is a highly competent verse writer rather than a greatly gifted one, but he has magnificent material to work with and wonderful adventures to relate. And though some of his rhymes seem forced, and his verse sometimes has about it a certain pedestrian monotony — he manages to sustain on a pretty high level a narrative of considerable complexity and length. This is no mean achievement.

Moreover the book contains another ballad, a minor gem of the first water. I refer to "Ballad of a Man Named Smith," which states the case for and against the minor writer both with brilliance and penetration and with irony and wit. Technically its derivation from "The Ancient Mariner" is obvious. Spiritually and intellectually it is original with Mr. Sullivan. And because its point of view is fresh and honest and unique, and because its execution is expert in the extreme—it deserves to be as durable as the durable name it celebrates. I recommend it without qualification to any writer whose dream exceeds his grasp, *i.e.*, to any honest man.

Martha Keller has been acclaimed for her ballads of American history.

To a Poet Who Feels Neglected

By William Justema

AS YOU say, what is the good the use
of breaking your heart daily,
of managing to endure, but hardly
by practising every ruse
so that poetry may obtain.

There is something stubborn in nature
and poetry is the crux of it,
yet how should beauty be revealed
if everyone seizes upon
and confuses it?

In neglect lies our substance and power
which may vanish as insensibly
as they were given to us
as to others who loudly abuse
that which makes poets of poets.

I imagine that blind Homer also,
not seeing the upturned faces,
often fretted with loneliness
singing out into a night
which was day somewhere and forever.

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Weighing Worksheets

POETS AT WORK. By Rudolf Arnheim, W. H. Auden, Karl Shapiro, Donald A. Stauffer. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1948. 186 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT HILLYER

IT WOULD be impossible to review this book adequately without duplicating it in length. The best one can do is to give a brief summary of its contents which consist of essays based on the modern poetry collection of the Lockwood Memorial Library of the University of Buffalo.

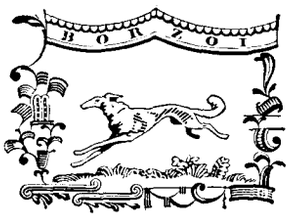
Charles D. Abbott, the onlie begetter of the collection of poets' worksheets at the University of Buffalo, leads off with an account of his adventures in gathering them. He found the poets more responsive and generous than anyone would expect, which is a tribute to his personality as well as his acumen. His essay reflects the learned enthusiasm of his aim, and includes, among other things, interesting tales of the poets and their habitats.

Donald A. Stauffer examines the manuscripts with a view to determining the differing impulses and methods of the poets in making their revisions, a subject well adapted to his alert critical understanding. Karl Shapiro continues the examination with especial reference to Spender, Williams, and Crane. His criticism works in the opposite direction from Mr. Stauffer's; that is, from the poet's mind outward to the manuscript. Rudolf Arnheim, with less citation from the collection, analyzes the psychology of the poetical process with an exactness that invites civilized dissent and discussion. W. H. Auden's observations are wholly enchanting. They are a series of notes on poetry in general. Heartily agreeing with everything he says, I find him wise and humorous, profound and witty. His ideas are just right; his prose is delightful. Furthermore, in these days of lugubrious length, what could be more refreshing than a series of crisp paragraphs, each complete in itself? In conclusion, I should add that Samuel P. Chapin, the chancelor of the University of Buf-

(*Continued on page* 43)

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Robert Browning. 2. Lord Byron. 3. Thomas Campbell. 4. Coleridge. 5. Antoine D'Arcy. 6. Edward Fitzgerald. 7. Bret Harte. 8. John Hay. 9. Felicia Hemans. 10. John Keats. 11. Rudyard Kipling. 12. Henry W. Longfellow. 13. John Masefield. 14. Joaquin Miller. 15. John Milton. 16. Edgar Allan Poe. 17. Alan Seeger. 18. William Shakespeare. 19. Alfred Tennyson. 20. Oscar Wilde.



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—CLIFTON FADIMAN, *Book of the Month Club News*

❧ "Mr. Coppard is almost the first English writer to get into English prose the peculiar quality of English lyric poetry. I do not mean that he is metrical; I mean that hitherto no English prose writer has had the fancy, the turn of imagination, the wisdom, the as it were piety, and the beauty of the great seventeenth-century lyricists like Donne or Herbert—or even Herrick." —FORD MADOX FORD

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A Half-Century of Comic Art

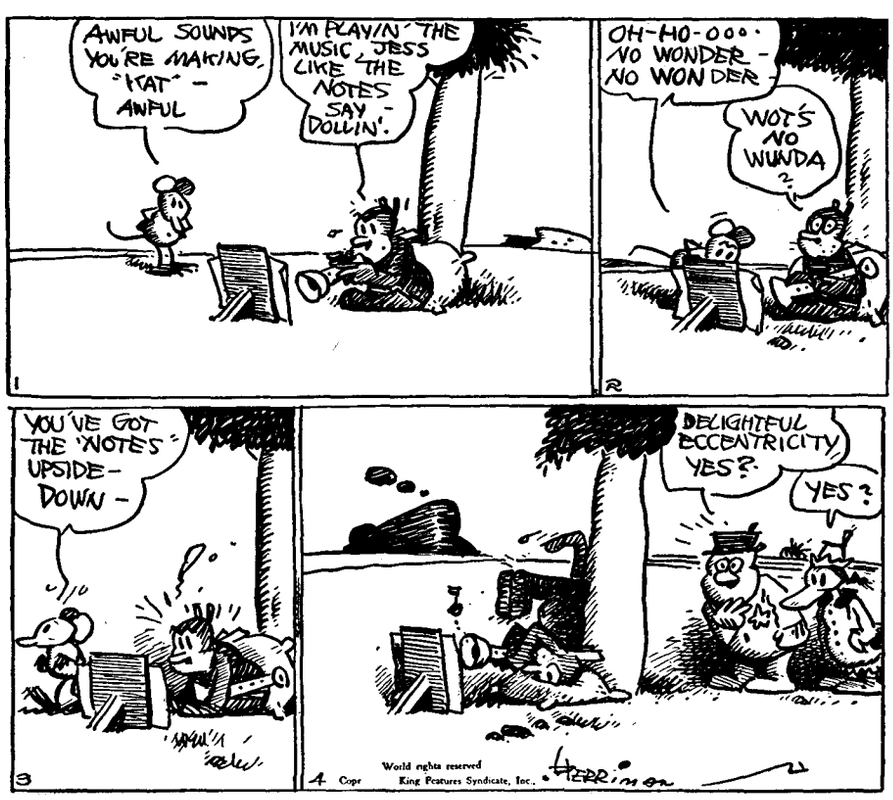
WILLIAM LAAS

THE AMERICAN comic strip, one of the lively cultural offshoots of our slambang civilization, was born exactly fifty-two years ago, come February 16, in the fiercely competitive press of *fin de siècle* New York. In Joseph Pulitzer's *World* that Sunday morning in 1896 there appeared for the first time a grinning, ugly, aborted child, inked in a dirty, ankle-length nightshirt gaudily splashed with light yellow. "The Yellow Kid," as he soon came to be called, gave his name to spectacular journalism; but more important, his regular reappearance established a new art form of unprecedented vitality, fecundity, and longevity.

Over the intervening half-century, that rowdy child of R. F. Outcault and some anonymous, but acute, feature editor has had thousands of lineal descendants, legitimate and illegitimate, whose millions of separately recorded adventures have ensnared billions of readers. America has grown up with the "funnies." People have been born and have died within the life-span of a single cartoon character. "Skeezix," who first appeared in "Gasoline Alley" as an infant, is now a young husband of twenty-seven with family problems. "The Captain and the Kids," Rudolph Dirks's original version of the ageless "Katzenjammers," recently celebrated its fiftieth Christmas. In short, this has been going on for a long time.

Hence it is surprising that the American comic strip has received so little critical attention, other than periodic complaints. As a people, of course, we are habitually slow to recognize our own fertile inventions as "culture." Europeans usually are the first to detect lasting values in such phenomena Americana as Mark Twain, Walt Disney, Charlie Chaplin, or jazz. Until very recently, most adult and literate Americans found it necessary to read the comics surreptitiously and to apologize when caught. The point is that they found it necessary to read them. The comic strip habit is not discarded along with bobby-sox and marbles; it persists at least as late as interest in baseball and the fights.

In this franker, more objective, and introspective age, we may be ready to concede that there is more in this technique than claptrap for the puerile. The literature on the subject is scanty but growing. Last fall, Coulton Waugh, an ex-comic artist himself, produced a conscientiously researched and profusely illustrated book with a definitive title, "The Comics."* To write it, Mr. Waugh, who is a painter and the son of a painter, spent several years sniffing the crumbling files of the New York newspapers. Since the Nineties, those journals have published at least 1,000,000 daily instalments of cartoon features. "The Comics" reads as if Mr. Waugh, or an assistant, looked at them all.


AWFUL SOUNDS YOU'RE MAKING "FAT" - AWFUL
I'M PLAYIN' THE MUSIC JESS LIKE THE NOTES SAY - DOLLIN'.
OH-HO-000· NO WONDER - NO WONDER
WOT'S NO WUNDA?
YOU'VE GOT THE 'NOTES' UPSIDE-DOWN -
DELIGHTFUL ECCENTRICITY
YES?
YES?
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HERRIMAN

—*From the book.*

"Poor 'Krazy' had been losing money for years."

BECAUSE of the enormous labor involved, "The Comics" is likely to stand for some time as a source-book. But for the casual reader, Mr. Waugh's eye-minded method is perhaps unfortunate; its result is in essence a technical guide for the budding cartoonist. One does not learn how comic strips originate, what makes them tick, or what their social implications may be, merely by reading the end-product of the vast journalistic complex that fosters them. This book offers little insight into the editorial and commercial processes involved along with the creative, and it rather slavishly accepts surface facts as meaningful. Insiders, moreover, will find it dotted with factual errors, a few of them howlers. Perhaps Mr. Waugh had to rely for background information upon letters from cartoonists or their promotion managers, both of whom are apt to be entertaining but apocryphal.

Not every published comic strip, not even every widely-circulated one, is worthy of serious study. "The Comics" wastes a good deal of space upon mediocrities. The signature on a feature doesn't necessarily identify the person to be credited with its art work, continuity, concept, or even origin. In this book there are drawings "by" men who haven't dipped a pen in twenty years. And the word "wild," which appears at least once on practically every page, is in my opinion too shallow an assessment of the comic art approach.

Nevertheless Mr. Waugh has been serious and thorough, in a field of criticism distinguished for the quick brush-off and the once-over-lightly, and most of his theoretical conclusions are sound enough so far as they go. Since "The Comics" does define the scope of the material, organizing it in a not unreadable way, it must rank as a good start toward the ultimate classic work.

(*Continued on page* 39)

*THE COMICS. By Coulton Waugh. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 360 pp. $5.

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Seeing Things

THE CASE AGAINST THE COMICS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *On Tuesday, March 2, over the radio program "America's Town Meeting of the Air," moderated by George V. Denny, Jr.,* SRL's *John Mason Brown debated with Al Capp, creator of "L'il Abner," over the question of "What's Wrong with Comics?" Supported by Marya Mannes, author of "Message from a Stranger," Mr. Brown sparred so spiritedly with Capp and his partner, George J. Hecht, publisher of* Parents' Magazine, *that the fan mail from delighted listeners was the heaviest in many weeks. We reprint below Mr. Brown's opening statement, followed by Mr. Capp's allegorical defense.*

THE COMICS, alas, like death and taxes, are very much with us. And, to my way of thinking, they are equally unfunny. Why they are called comics, when people who read them—young and old—almost always look like undertakers, eludes me. But we'll let that pass. Just as most of us as parents have had to let comics pass into our homes—against our wills, against our wishes, against our better judgment.

I love comedians, the highest and the lowest. I love cartoons, too. My allergy to comics, however, is complete, utter, absolute. I know there are bad comics, and I presume there are good comics. I have read a few of both—under protest. But I regret them both. I deplore them. And, to continue the understatement, I abhor them. So far as I am concerned, they might just as well be written in a foreign language for which no dictionary was ever published. I wish they had been.

Let me quickly admit that I am low enough, and sometimes defeated enough, as a parent, to make use of comics. I mean in desperate moments when, of a rainy Sunday morning or afternoon, I want peace in the home. Or when I am traveling with my two sons on a train and need to subdue them. Then—yes, I'll confess it—then I do resort to comics. Without shame. Without conscience.

On such occasions I don't so much distribute comics as I administer them to my sons. Much as a barkeep would pour out a Mickey Finn. Or a doctor employ a hypodermic. As knockout drops for unruly children, as sedatives and Maxim silencers, comics do have their undeniable uses. This much I'll concede, gratefully.

I'll also grant that so long as other people's children read comics we have scant hope, and perhaps less right, to keep our own from doing so. It would be unfair for us to deny to our children what is now a group experience and, when they have grown up, will have become a group memory of their generation.

If I hate the comics. I have my reasons. I know that, as part of a healthy diet, everyone needs a certain amount of trash. Each generation has always found its own trash. I doubt if our grandfathers were harmed by the dime novels about Kit Carson, Jesse James, etc., on which they fed. I doubt, too, if Little Nemo, Mutt and Jeff, Foxy Grandpa, Buster Brown, or the Katzenjammer Kids did serious damage to those of my vintage when we read them once a week.

Give me Henty, "The Rover Boys," "The Motor Boys," or "Tom Swift on the Mississippi," or any books written in words for those who can read, any day in preference to the comic books. The comic books, however, as they are nowadays perpetually on tap, seem to me to be, not only trash, but the lowest, most despicable, and most harmful form of trash. As a rule, their word selection is as wretched as their drawing, or the paper on which they are printed. They are designed for readers who are too lazy to read, and increase both their unwillingness and inability to do so.

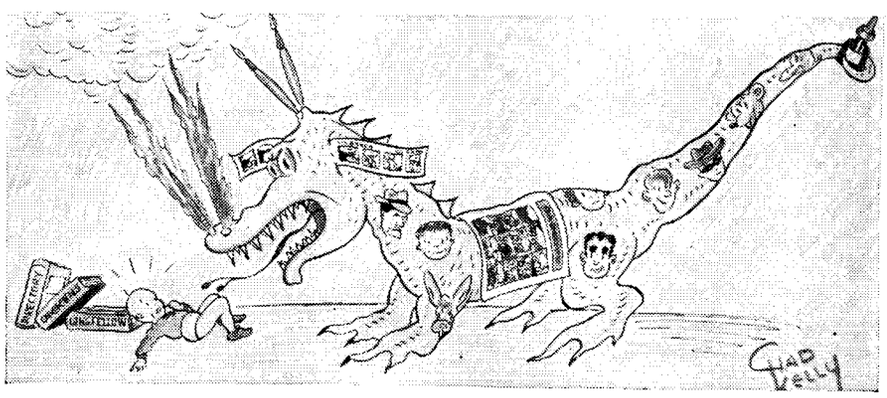
I won't and can't deny that comic books fascinate the young as, in terms of pigs, rabbits, rodents, morons, and supermen, they tell their illustrated stories. But, as a writer, I resent the way in which they get along with the poorest kind of writing. I hate their lack of both style and ethics. I hate their appeal to illiteracy and their bad grammar. I loathe their tiresome toughness, their cheap thrills, their imbecilic laughter.

I despise them for making only the story count and not the HOW of its telling. I detest them, in spite of their alleged thrills and gags, because they have no subtlety, and certainly no beauty. Their power of seduction, I believe, lies in the fact that they make everything too easy. They substitute bad drawing for good description. They reduce the wonders of the language to crude monosyllables, and narratives to no more than printed motion pictures.

WHAT riles me when I see my children absorbed by the comics is my awareness of what they are not reading, and could be reading. In other words, of the more genuine and deeper pleasures that they could be having.

To compare Bugs Bunny or Donald Duck with "The Jungle Book" or even "The Travels of Babar"; to set Wanda, the Wonder Woman against "Alice in Wonderland," Batman and Robin, Dick Tracy, and Gene Autry against "Treasure Island," L'il Abner against "Huck Finn" or "Tom Sawyer," or Superman and Captain Marvel against Jules Verne or "Gulliver's Travels," is to realize that, between the modern cave-drawing (which a comic book is) and a real book, there is—to put it mildly—a difference. A tragic difference, which is hard on the young, and may be harder on the future.

Anatole France once described even the best books as being "the opium of the Occident." Well, most comics, as I see them, are the marijuana of the nursery; the bane of the bassi-



Cartoonist Chad Kelly, author of "The Babcocks," was inspired by John Mason Brown's broadcast to produce the above drawing: "I was so impressed by your version of the ill effects of cartoons on little children that I pictured myself as a fire-eating dragon with pencils and pens for horns that gobbled up infants' gullible brain cells and left them in a state of insomnia."

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NANCY WALKER
in
LOOK, MA, I'M DANCIN'!
ADELPHI Theatre, 54th St. E. of B'way.
Evgs. 8:30. Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:30

net; the horror of the house; the curse of the kids; and a threat to the future. They offer final and melancholy proof that, even among the young, the mind is the most unused muscle in the United States.

* * *

I don't care how popular comics are with the young or, worse still, with the old. They seem to me to be sad proofs of arrested undevelopment. Time in the modern world is no longer something to be wasted. The moment has overtaken us, whether we like it or not, and most of us do not, when as a people we must grow up. In order to grow up, we must put behind us that fear of the best and that passion for the mediocre which most Americans cultivate.

JOHN MASON BROWN.

THE CASE FOR THE COMICS

THIS whole thing gives me an idea for one of those daily contributions to juvenile delinquency which I call—rather defiantly—my comic strip.

The scene is the typical American home of a typical American family—named Kinsey, of course. Supper is over, and seated in the living room are Mr. and Mrs. Kinsey and their eleven-year-old son, Kingsblood. They're discussing what they've read in that day's typical American newspaper. Mr. Kinsey says he's mighty pleased about the new atomic bomb which can blast the bloody brains out of two or three hundred million irritating foreigners — and then he chats about that prize fight in Chicago that resulted in one of the young athletes being punched to death in front of thousands of happy, cheering, typical American sport lovers. But Mrs. Kinsey is more interested in talking about the latest society divorce and the published front-page excerpts from the fun-loving young matron's diary in which she refers with fine, wholesome frankness to her dates with twenty or thirty of her ever-loving husband's dipsomaniac chums.

Well! Little Kingsblood has gone through all that — and, frankly, it bored him. He's reading the one page of the family newspaper where there's real action—the comic page.

Mrs. Kinsey, noticing that little Kingsblood is not joining in this uplifting discussion of the front page of their family newspaper, glances over his shoulder and screams a typical horrified-American-mother-type scream.

"Look!" she screams to Mr. Kinsey, "Look at what your child is reading."

"It's only Dick Gravy," replies lit-

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tle Kingsblood. (I refer here to a great and wonderful detective comic strip which shall remain nameless, because I am too shrewd to give a rival all this valuable publicity.)

"Only Dick Gravy my eye!" snarls his mother. "Why, this thing is full of murder, crime, violence—and look —There's even a boy in it who doesn't think a girl in it is repulsive! So . . . it's full of S-E-X, TOO!!"

Mr. Kinsey now speaks: "I've been reading several articles lately by several psychologists or psychiatrists, or something, that state that these stories of murder, crime, violence, and S-E-X are very bad stuff for kids, son! Why do you bother with that old comic page anyhow, son? Why don't you read the news, son?"

It's his son he's talking to.

"I did, Pop," replies the lad. "It's all full of murder, crime, violence—" and he winks, ". . . and S-E-X, too!!"

Mr. Kinsey looks over the front page of the newspaper and he's got to admit that the kid is right. He tears the newspaper up, and he says, "Then, according to those articles by child psychologists, news is bad stuff for kids, and those psychologists must be right, because all the articles ABOUT psychologists all say they're always right and *those* articles must be right, because they're written by other psychologists."

"Son!" Mr. Kinsey says, pulling a volume off the bookshelf, "Why don't you read a good book instead? Like 'Oliver Twist'?"

"I read it," reports little Kinsey, "it's about a kid who falls in with a criminal named Fagin, who teaches him how to commit crimes, and there's a big ape in it named Sykes, who beats a girl to death, and—"

"Stop!" cries his father, "Stop!— I can see now that the works of Charles Dickens are very bad for kids." He tears them all up. He feels he owes this to the child psychologists.

Now, Mr. Kinsey, with all those articles by the psychologists in his mind, goes through his typical American-family-bookshelf. He reexamines "Treasure Island" and "Kidnapped" by Robert Louis Stevenson, and finds several very juicy murders, lots of rip-roaring crime and violence in them, and he tears 'em all up!!

"Alice in Wonderland" must go, because the Queen in that keeps saying "Off with their heads!!" and that is not only violent, but it often results in death.

Well, pretty soon there's nothing left in the house except the phone directory and a volume of the complete works of Shakespeare.

With a sigh, li'l Kingsblood picks up the Shakespeare and begins to read.

With a loud roar of "No! No! No! my child!!" his father snatches it away from him in the nick of time!!!!!!

"This book is full of stories of murder, crime, violence, and S-E-X!" he roars.

"But Pop!" says little Kingsblood —"it's Shakespeare!"

"Fancy names don't fool me," replies his father. "I've read those articles by those psychologists. If they're right, Shakespeare is poison for kids—if they're right, it's a very bad influence!"

Comic strips are nothing new. They're as old a form as the written word itself. Just combinations of pictures and text that tell stories. The Egyptians did 'em, in their own way, in the tombs of the Pharaohs. Milt Caniff and I do 'em now in our own way. Comic strippers are storytellers —just the same as people who write radio shows and books and movies.

Some of us are right—some are wrong. It's the same with child psychologists: Some are right—some are wrong! But, don't worry about the kids, they're usually right!

The Tower Perhaps

By Laura Benet

HOW GRATEFUL two-legged man for little good
Of little satisfaction and creation,
Partaking of his water and his food
With egotistical intense elation.
Flinging his shutters to the morning wind,
Banishing from his study, curious flies.
"Perhaps"—the druidic word absorbs his mind,
"Perhaps"—scenes flicker on his blinded eyes.
Thus day by day, he builds his tower, Perhaps,
A rare cathedral of fantastic stone,
Nave and clerestory, soaring spire and apse,
Fashioned from his relinquishments alone.
And worships in his dreams the phantom shrine
Whose incense nourishes like meat and wine.

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

HOW GREEN WAS MY IRELAND

IT TOOK a crop failure to get the Irish out of Ireland, and now it's taking the airplane, and every ship available, to get them back. No less than 25,000 Irishmen make the pilgrimage back to auld sod each year. One travel bureau has had some 14,000 applications for this summer, estimates that it will be able to fulfil about one per cent of them.

However heavy the eastward rush, it is nothing compared to the westward migration that started when the potatoes failed in 1846. One hundred and nine thousand people came over that year, and in 1847 the figure was doubled. Between 1846 and 1860 a million and half Irish fled to America, and more came in through Canada and crossed into the States. These were the O'Briens and O'Tooles, the Rooneys and the Reillys, MacNamara and his band. They gave America shamrocks and shillelaghs, corned beef and cabbage, motormen and mayors, Irish whiskey, Irish jigs, Irish cops, Tim Costello's saloon, and Mother Machree.

But even though it seemed sometimes that there was more of Ireland here than there, every Irishman from Paddy's pig to Finian McLonergan still longed to go back. Now with travel not yet normal the Irish were inviting Americans to share in the glory. Already Ireland had, in Shannon, one of the best airports in Europe, used by virtually every transatlantic airline. At any hour of day or night smart looking brass-buttoned waiters invited ocean travelers to relax in the soft chairs, have fancy pastry and coffee, and what was fast becoming internationally known as a "Shannon breakfast." Ireland's airport made a shambles out of France's rickety Orly Field and Newfoundland's slap-together job at Gander.

In cottages 100,000 welcomes . . .

Next, the Irish began talking about their own transatlantic airline. Giant Constellations decorated with Kelly green have already been delivered to the new Irish Airlines. In New York the company opened a whole building decorated with green-colored walls, and filled it with green-gowned colleens and a crop of capable executives who sound like Barry Fitzgerald playing the life of Howard Hughes.

Frankly the Irish were inviting the American tourist to come along home with them. They wanted them to share in the Limerick bacon, the Shannon salmon, the County Clare mutton, the rich butter and cheeses from South Tipperary. And as one nostalgic dreamer added, "It's inevitable that there'll be Irish whiskey."

To the returning Irishman, the biggest tourist attraction would be the sight of his home and the traditional Gaelic greetings of his relatives. *Cead Mile Failte*, they would say, A Hundred Thousand Welcomes. But the tourist could wander among the thatched roof cottages, the queer houses stuck all over with cockle shells, the ruins of the castles of the Normans and the Irish chieftains. He could hunt for stag and hare in the stone-wall country of Galway, shoot grouse and pheasant in the boglands, fish for salmon and speckled and brown trout, take cliff walks along the sea coast, watch the flimsy curraghs bob in the Irish sea. He could listen to the strange tales of the Glendaloch, pursue the legend of the Blarney stone, visit Ballyhooly, Ballyhoura, Ballingeary, and Skibbereen. He could see the races, watch Gaelic football, and attend a session of hurling, a Pier 6 version of field hockey. With an export license obtained in Dublin he could bring home tweeds at $4 a yard, fine laces, pottery, Waterford cut glass, and Irish linens. In hotels like the Gresham, the Shelbourne, and the Royal Hibernian, the best in Dublin, he could have a room for $7 a day, food included. He would find a country without rationing, virtually untouched by the war. Most of all, he would find Ireland's Irish to be "a dacent people" who considered the United States a handy annex for their migrations. Some time ago on the Aran Islands, the westernmost point of Ireland, thirty miles off the coast, a farmer whose son had emigrated to America was queried by a neighbor. "Where's the lad?" the man next door asked. "Haven't seen him about for a fortnight."

"Shamus?" answered the farmer, pointing to New York. "Why he's gone over to the next parish."

HORACE SUTTON.

—Photos by Irish Tourist Assn., Inc.

. . . In the playing fields a Pier 6 brawl.

Land of Country People

IRELAND is a country that has been only to a slight extent urbanized: it is still a country of country people —of farmers living on a few acres of land in cottages built of materials that were to be *found at hand*. This means that the visitor is going into a country "behind the times" in many ways. The sight of empty roads, untrimmed hedgerows, cottages remote from each other may leave an emptiness in the minds of some people; to others it may bring a sense of liberation, of a return to a long lost quietness. There are visitors to Ireland who miss medieval cities, great cathedrals, historic palaces; there are visitors who miss the forests, the parks, the well-ordered prospects of other European countries. What Ireland offers is something less rich, less settled, and, at the same time, less mundane, than such splendid sights.

Water is everywhere. There is the green of the grass, a living kind of green, and always near the grass is the gray of the stones: it is the ever-present grayness of the stones with the grayness of the great clouds above and the unexampled light that is due to these most picturesque of clouds

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that give Ireland such a strange beauty. "May we not recognize in this," wrote an eighteenth-century Englishman, the traveler Arthur Young, "the hand of bounteous Providence which has given perhaps the most stony soil in Europe the moistest climate of it. . . . But the rocks here are covered with verdure; those of limestone, with only a thin covering of mold, have the softest and most beautiful turf imaginable." The gray walls are covered with heavy, wide-leaved ivy. A green valley with bare mountains around it filled with the light that comes when the sun bursts through the clouds is a sight that is different from any other in the world.

Where there are remains from ancient times — Cashel, Clonmacnoise, Glendalough—they look more ancient than do ruins in any other land. One has to have something like a gift, I think, to feel this particular kind of landscape, but the one who can feel it gets something from it that is a kind of enchantment.

Dublin is a city that one gains by being familiar with. It is an eighteenth-century city with the splendid eighteenth-century residential squares intact. It retains the eighteenth-century leisure, too. The long twilights in these squares or in the great Phoenix Park have the effect of sustained nocturnes. And the visitor who has read Joyce's "Ulysses," George Moore's "Hail and Farewell," James Stephens's "Charwoman's Daughter," will never feel isolated in Dublin: the streets, the squares, the parks will have reminiscences for him. Dublin's theatres have great liveliness; the two galleries, the National Gallery and the Municipal, each have a fine selection of pictures; the Municipal Gallery is modern—there one can see exciting examples of French, English, and Irish modern work.

PADRAIC COLUM.

Inspiration of Poets

EARLY IRISH LITERATURE. By Myles Dillon. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1948. 192 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by VIVIAN MERCIER

"THERE are only three subject-matters for a man of understanding," says a famous couplet in Old French, "those of Britain, France, and Rome the Great." The "matter of Britain" includes, besides the Arthurian sagas, much Irish material that found its way into medieval French literature by way of Wales and Brittany. Professor Dillon's new book is the best short summary to date of that magnificent body of ancient Irish

With this issue, SRL *inaugurates an occasional service to persons and groups interested in 16 mm. sound films. The growing interest in these films by so many people has prompted the editors to offer* SRL *readers a guide to the non-theatrical cinema. From time to time selected lists of films which meet a real need will be integrated with some regular department or will supplement special articles. Listed below are seven films on Ireland.*

The Travel Log

The Saturday Review's Guide to 16mm. Sound Films for the Fireside Traveller

IRELAND

Where my heart is I am going
Where the River Shannon flows

*Available without charge **Available for purchase or rental
***Available for school, church and club groups only

Title	*Details*	*Description*
WINGS TO IRELAND*	Color. Sound. 30 minutes. Pan American World Airways	Describes the trip of a typical American family during a visit to the Emerald Isle. The tour includes scenes of beauty and historical significance: Killarney, Tipperary, Dublin, the Counties Mayo and Cork, and the Blarney Castle. The life of the Irish people is shown at work and play; business, agriculture, home industries, and festivities at a county fair are highlighted.
IRELAND**	Black and white. Sound. 16 minutes. March of Time	Offers glimpses of the proverbial Irish national character, the poetic landscape, and the political, economic, and social problems which face the country today.
GEM OF THE SEA***	Black and white. Sound. 10 minutes. Twentieth Century-Fox; Magic Carpet Series	Views of ancient Irish architecture in and around Dublin with a sequence on the Church of St. Mellary where the carillon chimes play "Londonderry Air" and the choir sings "Missa Cantata."
GLIMPSES OF ERIN***	Black and white. Sound. 10 minutes. MGM; FitzPatrick Traveltalk	Rural life in the Connemara section in western Ireland and the Galway region in the south of Ireland.
IRISH PASTORAL***	Black and white. Sound. 9 minutes. Twentieth Century-Fox; Along the Road-to Romance Series	Random views around Dublin and Limerick portraying much of the traditional life of the people.
IRISH FANTASY**	Black and white. Sound. 10 minutes. Nu-Art Films, Inc.	An old Celt tells a little boy of his own youth during the nineteenth century. Characteristic Irish music is sung by a tenor in the background.
THE SPORTING IRISH***	Black and white. Sound. 10 minutes. Paramount; Grantland Rice Series	An intimate picture of the recreational life in Ireland with slow motion scenes of hurling techniques.

For further information about the purchase or rental of these and other films, please write to Travel Department, The Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45 Street, New York 19, N. Y.

Some 16 mm. sound films are available without cost; rentals made through your local educational film library seldom exceed one dollar per reel.

N. B. Sound films must be shown on a sound projector. Silent films can be used on a sound projector, but sound films will be mutilated beyond repair if run on a silent projector.

Film rental charges are generally quoted for a single day; prices are scaled down if used for longer periods.

All films are shipped express collect and returned express prepaid.

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Lively as a political barbecue down South

An Alabama housewife tells the realistic and intimate story of Southern family life, deftly probing with imagination and courage. The eighth of nine children provokes plenty of chuckles and laughs along with sympathetic understanding of the problems of the Black Belt from the 1880's to the 1920's.

WITH A SOUTHERN ACCENT

by

VIOLA GOODE LIDDELL

$3.00 at all bookstores

University of Oklahoma Press
Norman, Oklahoma

literature which has been the inspiration of poets in every generation from the late Middle Ages to the present.

Myles Dillon, now professor of Celtic at the University of Edinburgh, is one of the greatest Celtic scholars in the world. He was chosen to establish the department of Irish studies at the University of Wisconsin in 1937 and taught there for nine years; he also taught at the University of Chicago. Before coming to this country, he had a distinguished career as scholar and teacher in Germany and Ireland. After such an apprenticeship, he was ideally equipped to compile the present survey, aimed chiefly at the general reader.

"Early Irish Literature" provides a summary of every important story in the great cycles; many of the loveliest passages are translated word for word. The author gives only the necessary minimum of scholarly commentary, and is thus able to cover a great deal of ground. The reader will find not only the great stories—those of Deirdre, of Dermot and Grania, of Cuchulain, of Bricriu—which are already familiar to him through the writings of Yeats, Synge, and others, but also such hidden treasures as "The Vision of Adamnan," which may have inspired Dante, and that irresistible parody, "The Vision of Mac Con Glinne." He will find a whole chapter dealing with the "Adventures" of a number of legendary characters in the Celtic "Other World"—the "Land of Youth." Above all, he will be grateful to Professor Dillon for the last chapter, where in forty pages is summarized the course not merely of *early* Irish poetry, but of all poetry in the Irish language from its beginnings to the end of the eighteenth century. Many of Kuno Meyer's famous translations are included in this section.

I have only two criticisms of Professor Dillon's study. One is that he seems almost entirely unaware of the relevance of anthropology to his subject; after all that has been done by Frazer and his successors, it is odd in a work of this kind to find only the vaguest hints at the ritual and magical basis of mythology. My second criticism is that a book so calculated to whet the appetite gives no short list of the feast of Irish literature that is now available in English. Here I can only mention Lady Gregory's two great books, "Cuchulain of Muirthemne" and "Gods and Fighting Men," and Frank O'Connor's "The Fountain of Magic." They will be enough for a beginning.

I would urge those who have never had any previous interest in mythology to read Professor Dillon's book. It will open up a new world to them, a world that is already lurking in their own unconscious. If Jung is correct, these and other myths embody the "collective unconscious" of mankind. A generation like ours, that knows and cares so little for the myths of the Old Testament, is impoverishing its inner life; these Irish myths cannot fail to enrich that life, which faces starvation and death in the desert of our hyper-conscious civilization.

The Lengthening of Hems

By Maureen Cobb Mabbott

PAST the first delight of living and being,
Slowly past the unhappy thirteenth year,
Safe in the temperate climate of my love,
And lately and more quickly, and less safe,
Past time and dancing and people to this
Dull lengthening of hems: my daughter.

As I kneel beside her measuring hems,
The golden shifting of the afternoon
Rests in a cloudy nimbus on her hair,
Runs out in silence, moving on my hands
Like dreaming moments in a ritual:
Turn now, turn again, turn, and turn again.

Spiraling, resistless, her love ascends
The circular stairs of her heritage.
Discerned as through a veil of water
Is the vision, glimmering mistily
On our near voices: In the turning, time
Is meeting. Turn, again, once more, once more.

Turn, turn, and face to face upon the stair
Full in my glance she meets the grown heart's-rage:
I love you, I cannot help you. Turn, turn.
The chime of shadows falls upon the room
Where April, deaf to pity in the air,
Whirls in mirrored green reflections: Turn again.

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PERILS OF POETRY

(Continued from page 20)

is a touch!) you undoubtedly follow. A little crazed with success, these other lines immediately suggest themselves:

Render the jaguar night adentulate
To learn the liquid labials of the moon . . .

followed by the strange

Red yawn of sunset hiccupping a star—
Yet, after sea's reflection so incarmined,
Marah in view. . . .

I'm sure that you remember the passage of the Red Sea?

Of course no random quotation is fair, and perhaps this flippancy is out of place. But when a modern poet writes the line (not at all my own invention!) "The speechful day in knowing langors goes," and entitles his poem "N. B., Symmetrians," it drives me a wee bit mad. It reminds me also of my friend Florian Vetch, the Antipodean, whose latest book, "The Knees of the Burgomaster," is privately printed; for he has averred, "I oppose the mongrelization of language as well as the distortion of reason; but my way may be said to lie along the ecliptic of appearances." And now I am right back in that mesmerized landscape where the croquet mallets are turning into flamingoes! I know that critics have remarked that Vetch is also realistic, as in his famous poem "Three Star":

I slug the pane. A star. I slug. A Star. I slug. A STAR.

and here, indeed, he condenses the whole drive of the intoxicating poetic impulse into one line. Not to mention its pains. He announces himself as the poet of virility. He challenges the artificial medium we have interposed between ourselves and the outer reality. To be sure.

Poets can use their enormous appetite for phraseology and their constant desire for strangeness to make all sorts of admirable things. I merely would have them stop, look, and listen—O, above all, listen!—before they saunter down some verbal byway into the everglades of too swampy an unreason. Sometimes one encounters there great big snakes! There is bound to be a vast wastage in any art. Gradually the genuine emerges. Meanwhile we have the playful—and who would not let them play?—and the reckless, who make seizure occasionally upon remarkable and treasurable things. And certainly we must all acknowledge the intrepidity of the pioneer. But also, could we have just a little less nonsense? W. R. B.

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MORROW

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Dear May Sarton:

Sometimes one has an impulse to write to the author how much one likes a book. I happen to have seen advance proofs of your THE LION AND THE ROSE. I think your poem *My Sisters, O My Sisters* is one of the most extraordinary poems by a woman that I have ever read. Naturally, I would like *Not Always the Quiet Word* and *Who Wakes?* You have *saeva indignatio.* But also *The Clavichord* — so different a kind of poem — is a gem. And I have seen Texas and the Charleston plantations, and an ancestor of mine went to Natchez. You have described those parts of America and the Middle West, in your poems of teaching, so well! — And what a fine poem to the scholar. Not often can poets cope with the actuality and the dream. Your intensity is the sinew of the real poet.

Pardon this from an elderly versifier — and all good fortune go with you.

Sincerely,

William Rose Benet

WILLIAM ROSE BENET

THE LION AND THE ROSE
by MAY SARTON, is published by Rinehart & Company. Available at all bookstores, $2.00 a copy.

NEW EDITIONS

THE TWENTY-FIRST volume to take its place in the swelling ranks of the Cambridge University Press's "Shakespeare" is "Macbeth" ($2.50). This is an important newcomer, and its appearance marks the completion of one of John Dover Wilson's most difficult editorial tasks. While it furnishes the ordinary reader with a remarkably attractive edition of a mighty tragedy, it furnishes scholars with grist for long arguments, most of which can never be conclusive. Dr. Wilson moves boldly among thorny textual problems, but his courage is reinforced by such a body of Elizabethan and Jacobean learning as few men command. And when he can only guess, he says that he is guessing.

In his introduction he explores the historical background of "Macbeth," analyzes its principal characters, and relates its dramatic action to the original audience's belief in demonology; but it is with the history and nature of the unique Folio text that he is chiefly concerned. This, briefly, is his argument. The original version of "Macbeth" was longer than the one we know; it was probably abridged by Shakespeare himself, for a court performance in 1606; and this abridgment was handled by a "restorer," almost certainly Middleton, who added some fifty lines of his own to the witch-scenes, while cutting other scenes "drastically and crudely." Dr. Wilson believes that the earlier text, as well as the later, was written to please James I. He makes the "very daring" guess "that the earlier 'Macbeth' was the next play undertaken after 'Hamlet,' *i.e.*, that it was written in the second half of 1601 or early in 1602." He guesses further that it may well have been "first produced by Fletcher's company in the capital city of Scotland," and he even suggests the possibility that Shakespeare himself may have visited Scotland. These are brilliant conjectures, based on profound study. If Dr. Wilson has sometimes seemed to lack poetic imagination when dealing with some of Shakespeare's metaphorical passages, it cannot be denied that his imagination puts all his learning to the test whenever problems of composition confront him.

The notes in the present edition are copious, informative, stimulating; the glossary could hardly be better; and the stage history, supplied by C. B. Young, is full and interesting. Readers will notice that, in several instances, Dr. Wilson has been able to justify Folio words that have been rejected by previous editors. For example, the snake that all schoolboys know as "scotched" is again, as it was originally, "scorched." L. C. Knights has remarked that every rehandling of a Shakespearean text is "an essay in taste." John Dover Wilson has added another distinguished essay to his collection.

Random House's "Great Tales of Terror and the Supernatural," edited by Herbert Wise and Phyllis Fraser, has become a Modern Library Giant ($2.45). This is an excellent anthology, stuffed with tales calculated to chill the spine and challenge credence. Famous favorites mingle with stories of less reputation but equal merit. Among the former we find Balzac's "La Grande Bretêche," Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter," Maupassant's "The Horla," Poe's "The Black Cat," Wilkie Collins's "A Terribly Strange Bed," Jacobs's "The Monkey's Paw," and Hemingway's "The Killers"; while the second category includes such items as Conrad Aiken's "Silent Snow, Secret Snow," M. R. James's "Casting the Runes," H. P. Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Wall," and Isak Dinesen's "The Sailor-Boy's Tale." But this is only a sampling of more than a thousand well-chosen pages. And beside this Giant you may put a smaller anthology of kindred kind, which also displays sound editorial judgment: "The Pocket Book of Ghost Stories" (Pocket, 25c), edited by Philip Van Doren Stern. You will find in the two volumes some duplication of authors, but none of stories.

From the Pilgrim Press comes a new edition of William Allen Knight's "The Song of Our Syrian Guest" ($1), a tiny book that has been a best seller for over forty years by virtue of its interpretation of the Twenty-third Psalm.

Kenneth Fearing's "The Big Clock" (Grosset, $1), written with ingenuity and pace, is a much-better-than-average murder yarn; whereas Donald Henderson Clarke's "Murderer's Holiday" (Triangle Books, 59c) and Hugh Holman's "Slay the Murderer" (Grosset, $1) are plain-average . . . "Chicago Murders" (Pocket, 25c), a collection of real cases written by various hands, includes the famous Wynekoop Case, recently in the news again as a result of the defendant's release from prison after a fourteen-year stretch.

BEN RAY REDMAN.

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A HALF CENTURY OF COMIC ART

(*Continued from page 30*)

Comic strips are a childish, or at least a primitive, form of art, literature, and entertainment. They would scarcely warrant a second critical thought if it were not for their immense popularity, outranking all the rest of what Gilbert Seldes long ago labeled "the seven lively arts." Unquestionably, the comics are the most avidly consumed art form yet produced in the civilized world. The statistics are awe-inspiring. I daresay some sort of serialized cartoon appears in every American newspaper save only *The New York Times* and *The Christian Science Monitor*. Even allowing for the percentage of readers (less than twenty per cent) who skip the comic pages, their total readership exceeds 70,000,000 persons and approaches 100,000,000 — from one-half to two-thirds of the population of the United States, every day of every month, year after year. Only the movies can come anywhere near this, with an attendance of 95,000,000 per *week*, or only one movie-goer for every five or six followers of the comics.

And that's not all. The comic strip habit, like chewing gum, follows American arms and enterprise to the ends of the earth. No one knows the size of the foreign audience, but comic books, of which perhaps 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 are sold each month in this country, are also shipped abroad in such numbers as to worry chancelries strapped for dollar-exchange. In London recently a Member of Parliament, cribbing J. B. Priestley's October diatribe in '47 magazine, denounced this "Niagara of piffle." An ironic choice of metaphor, for the comic invasion is no easier to stop with epithets than the great cataract would be with a spoon.

American newspaper cartoons, too, are sold abroad; and even when the physical importation of our books or matrices is prohibited, native imitators spring up to replace them. This has already happened in the British countries, Scandinavia, Latin America, and perhaps elsewhere. I saw signs of it even in the one-sheet postwar press of Republican Italy.

By the history of all the arts we are warned against confusing mere popularity with genuine quality, but

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devotes itself almost exclusively to contemporary American poetry, and even prides itself upon being perhaps the chief and last remaining publishing institution on this continent to which an unknown poet of talent may turn with justifiable hope. Moreover since it subsists almost totally on poetry, *The Press of James A. Decker* can afford to be partial to no special school, but must rather strive to serve all schools—to remain tolerant of tradition no less than friendly to experiment. It is our aim to preserve for the laurels of posterity the work of whatever 20th century American poet the higher verdict of history may judge worthy of such recognition.

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Those who know Mr. Trace's work, and are also aware of the present literary and publishing conditions, will need no explanation. To future readers of this page—there will be some—we may say that a number of publishers have praised the book in such terms as the author does not care to have quoted here, but their unanimous pronouncement is, "There is no money in poetry." Conclusive, that.

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by the same token we may not ignore, even in the arts, that living principle of democracy: the ultimate validity of mass opinion. The first English novel was hack stuff, a newspaper serial aimed at newly-literate maidservants. Even the great Shakespeare was a bit of a crowd-pleaser in his day. Whether the comic strip is a real "art," or major creative invention, may very well be decided in our own time.

The comic strip is not "folk art," nor is it truly "primitive." It is as contrived a product as a movie, a musical comedy, or a popular song, with $$ for its Excelsior. As drawing, comic art is of the same genre as the doodles or sketches that schoolboys pencil on the margins of geography books, or ebullient salesmen on restaurant menus. But to this raw material an element of craft is applied. The fast sketch is developed with imagination and design until it is clear, vivid, active, and concise—but at that point, beyond which it would lose the appearance of spontaneity and ingenuousness, its development is deliberately arrested. There is no further "improvement" in the classic sense. Assistants faithfully copy the master's original doodles, and I know of one famous comic strip heroine whose proportions were standardized with calipers.

"Primitivist" may be a better word for this than "primitive," but even that is far-fetched. Comic art can only be understood in terms of its function, which is the delineation of characters and the narration of their adventures. The illusion is theatrical; the funny man borrows the tricks of the variety stage, the straight story-teller those of the drama or cinema. Within the confines of a few pictures or "panels," and within the limitations of a crude reproduction process, comic artists must perform a daily *tour de force* of showmanship.

Actually, the art work of a comic strip is subordinate to the story it tells, while the story, in turn, is secondary to the character whose story it is. You do not willingly laugh at the jokes of disagreeable people, or take much interest in the daily lives of strangers; but you roar when your own little boy merely says "peanuts," and worry sympathetically if your wife cuts her finger. The central character of a comic strip wins you to a similar attachment. It is the one element that cannot be manufactured but must be created; the chlorophyll, the living seed that establishes its creator as a true artist.

If comic strips are not "folk art," they are nonetheless a thing of the people. The good ones are alike in one quality, something I like to call "earthiness." Significantly, the giants of the comic strip world have been almost exclusively men (not women) out of the common herd. Not many are college-educated (Milton Caniff, who made "Terry and the Pirates" famous, is one of the few.) More frequent in their backgrounds is a fling at some colorful trade, such as vaudeville, the circus, or the sea, or attachment at adolescence to the newspaper trade itself. As people, comic artists are delightfully ordinary Joes blessed with humor or keen perception. Only by retaining this commonness amidst great wealth, like "Jiggs" in "Bringing up Father," can they avoid the occupational diseases of the comic-strip business: big-headedness, boredom, brain-fag, or the bottle.

Money-making writers and artists from other fields have a hard time with this elusive simplicity and earthiness. The syndicate business is littered with their failures. Booth Tarkington could never make a comic strip out of "Penrod," while the success of "Tarzan" stems not from Edgar Rice Burroughs but from a series of comic-trained ghosts. Painters like George Luks or Clyde Forsythe found the pace of comic art wearing. But Rudolph Dirks, now about seventy, still wears the peaked cap of the sporty young working-man of 1910, as if to remind himself never to advance beyond the perfected youthful exuberance of his "Katzies."

AS MIGHT be expected, this creative spark is rare. About 500 so-called comics, funny and unfunny, are for sale by syndicates ranging from Hearst's giant King Features down to one-man ventures with cosmic names. Not all the 500 possess quality, by any means, and a good many don't earn enough to feed a St. Bernard dog. The New York press prints about 125. Even in this selected group, not more than nine or ten can be considered first-class. The rest are workmanlike features with a solid but unspectacular following, successes of the past now on the way down, untested newcomers, imitations, mediocrities, or plain junk.

The flood of comic art apparently confuses critics (including Mr. Waugh), who imagine that every published feature is profitable and popular, and find themselves stretching for reasons to explain it. Comics are ultimately dependent upon popular favor, but there is a considerable time-lag. Meanwhile they can be artificially maintained by commercial deals or by the arbitrary fiat of some publisher with little flair for features. the *New York World-Telegram*, for example, once turned down "Li'l Abner," saving money with the "blanket service" of NEA, a Scripps-Howard

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affiliate. And the *Sun* to this day has never stumbled upon a comic-strip hit.

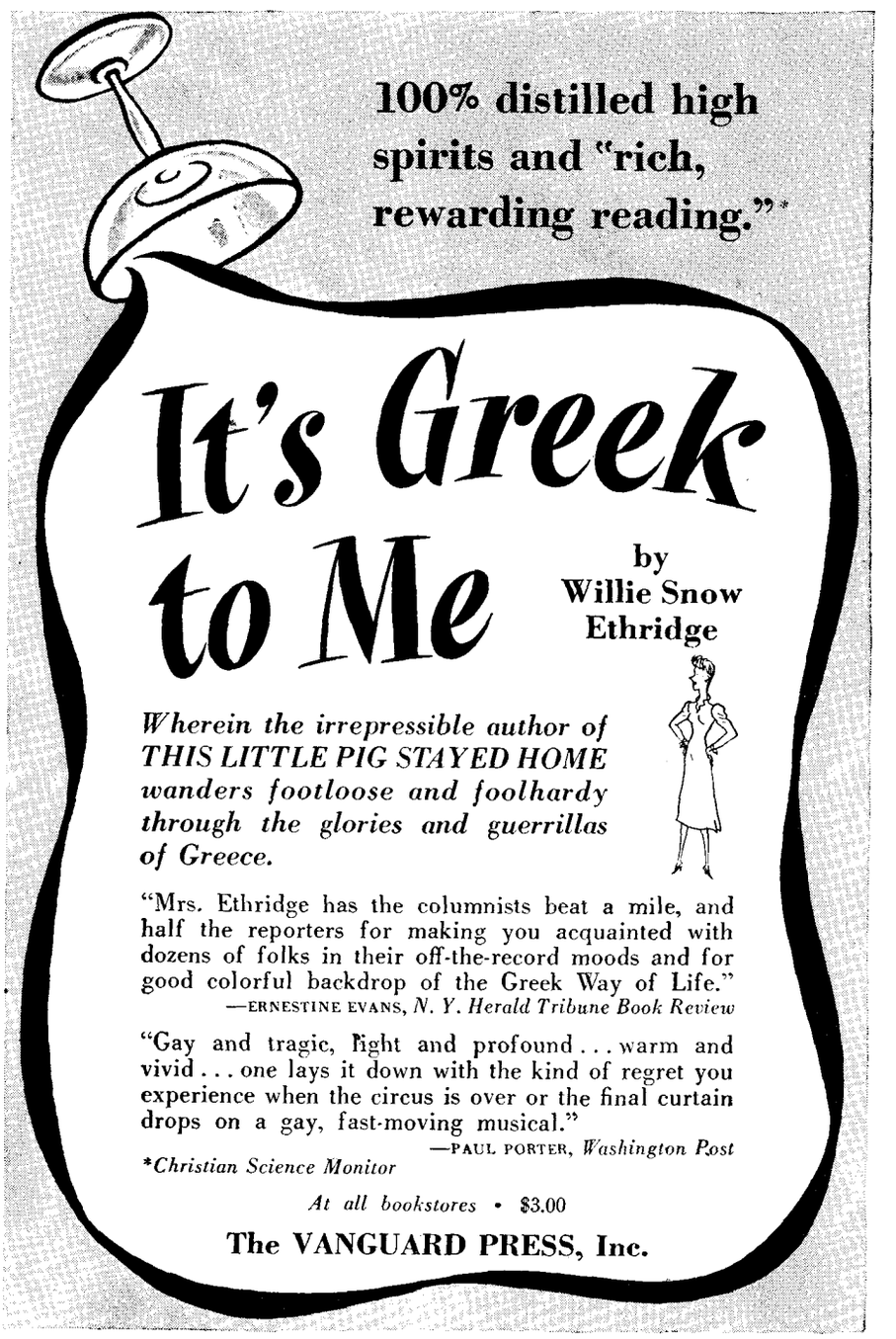
In the search for greatness, it is also misleading to go overboard for the darlings of the literati. If you remember "Krazy Kat," the Charlie Chaplin among strips of its time, you may wonder why it did not survive the death of its originator as so many famous comics do. Mr. Waugh speculates that no one could be found to match the unique fantasies of George Herriman, but the real reason was that poor "Krazy" had been losing money for years. The moment a comic strip leaves the solid earth, the moment its creator begins to fancy himself sophisticated, arty, esoteric, precious, poetic, or "significant"—at that moment it begins to sere like a banded tree. No comic artist can afford to sever his umbilical cord to the belly of the common people.

Does the comic strip have an artistic future? The chances are that it has. Does it have a degrading or retrogressive influence upon literature and the ability to read or think? The chances are that it hasn't. Through its use in advertising, in war propaganda, and in educating the young people of the armed forces to their duties, this art has lately proved itself an extremely fast, effective, and supra-lingual means of communicating ideas. But the swelling statistics of literary consumption meanwhile indicate that pictorial journalism tends to create new readers out of ex-illiterates. Although my completely unlettered daughter, aged three, is not yet ready for Dickens, her early fascination with comic sequences will most likely get her there the faster.

To enjoy comic strips, one is not required to be either a child or a dolt, although conceivably it helps. One is required, however, to relax for the fun of it, to turn off the intellect like a faucet so as not to dampen the comics' earthy vivacity. Those who fancy such momentary amusements should at present view the comics with some alarm. Currently, American comic art is passing through a sterile period. The liveliest strips, like "Li'l Abner," "Blondie," "Gasoline Alley," "Dick Tracy," and "Nancy," are all of prewar vintage, at least ten or fifteen years old; the wartime GI artists are floundering in the complexities of peace; and most of the postwar newcomers are following paths worn as deep as the wheel-ruts of Pompeii. One reason, perhaps, is the gradual disappearance of the syndicate editor, whose creative role in comic art is akin to that of the motion-picture director. His place has been taken by salesmen, which is as if businessmen producers were to direct their own pictures.

Comic art needs and awaits a young man with fresh ideas, a new approach to humor, and delight in humanity, a new character with a story to tell. I will cheerfully predict that he will be another man of the people. If he comes of a higher social or educational level than his greatest forebears, it will be a sign that the people, too, have progressed.

William Laas, managing editor of United Features Syndicate for about ten years before the war, recently joined '48 as managing editor.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DOUBLEDAY

On the Horns of Aries

By Henry John Firley

PROSERPINA now urges her raven-flanked fillies
Of the deep prairie loam to gallop full distance
Of the corn-growing orbit. Wild spring is in the wing
Of the mallard bronzing along the long river;
Lynx-breasted the willows pad softly the mist.
Purple voice of the trillium and the heart talk together.
The ice-stone is broken in the throat of the year.

Spring sperm grows heavy in the bones of the weather.
The flush of chlorophyll gains full possession.
Wicks of the oak flare green in the branches
When the year's first dimension is circled in green.
The time holds a temper for waiting much longer,
For again there's new earth. Pink blossoms are needed
For keeping our balance through blizzard and drought.

Spring is a truce between both ends of the weather.
March, April, May move with unrehearsed rhythm.
The fields begin sunning to white bread and honey;
There is wine in the making in small clusters on vine.
The lilacs burst color like purple-red popcorn;
Jade silence keeps sifting through the year's door ajar
Half-telling the secret of the wide sprawling Midland.

Spring is sweet clover fled from the hayloft
Far to the field, is the long green shadow
At the heel of the year, the shallow of time
Near brimful with genesis, and a strong bow bending
Horizon-halved with arrow of long June flight
Shot from the bloom of the moon-white hepatica.
Too soon the wild violet is over and long.

Spring holds the answer like a lone-marked steeple
Filled with the ringing of Easter Bells.
Now the bough shades wholly both bole and the dreamer.
Spring-marks are here of anemone blooming
Like snow-starred doves playing sleight of breast
In last autumn leaves, and of bloodroot with thick veins
As red as the tongues of our lost buffalo.

The morning-light posture of low drifting mist
Drapes like a bearded saga of cloud
On the stubble-green lanes of the lake shell scented.
The blue moldboard and shear of the afternoon sky
Plow furrows across the fenceless stretch
Of the inland lake where the gray fog smuts
And the gulls fluff breast in the whitecap dust.

The flush of the quail or the spout of the whale
Are identical with the sycamore's flow
When the season is in the "good morning" of year.
Spring strikes like a fabulous bass, rainbow-hooked,
Slapping green thunder from gunmetal clouds
With its tail, and showering its emerald scales freely
Over the ripples of the autumn-ploughed turf.

A flame hangs again in the near thunderhead,
and the wind-stars wound both cheeks of the lover.
Blustering spring is a white-plumed cockerel
High roosting in the boughs of the wild plum thicket
Shattering early dawn into full vernal bloom
With his silvery boasting to the high running sun;
While brute glory of equinox stampedes the blue tundra.

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(Continued from page 29)

falo, bestows his blessing on Professor Abbott's project and thus takes his place among the angels—a company rarely frequented by officers of administration.

The book is well worth having for the sake of any one of its parts.

Two Ways of Life

HEAVENLY CITY, EARTHLY CITY. By Robert Duncan. Berkeley, Calif.: Bern Porter. 1947. 33 *pp.* $2.75.

POEMS. By Robert Finch. New York: Oxford University Press. 1947. 51 *pp.* $1.25.

Reviewed by JAMES R. CALDWELL

THESE two volumes of verse are as different as up and down. Although the coupling of them in this review is somewhat fortuitous, they represent in fact two well defined ways of poetry and life.

Mr. Duncan, who is, I suppose, to be considered a member of the California avant garde, a corps somewhat mooted recently, focuses on the inner tensions of eccentric love. He writes, so to speak, from the bed and after midnight. In this situation he is reverently voluptuous, curious of shades, triste ("Among my friends love is a great sorrow"), and rather telling. His broodings grope toward the recesses of passion, and scarcely elsewhere, but they are kept under the control of a kind of passionate dignity. His fabric, though rich, is never quite bizarre. Some of his sad cadences haunt the ear. If he reminds one a little of the "Fleshly School" of the Eighties ("I am a most fleshly man . . ."), he keeps still his own quality. His are sensitively wrought poems, and include some subtle manipulations of consonance, and syllabic rhyme.

Mr. Finch, a Canadian poet, looks outward to the day and the seasons, people and small events. His poems are pointed with the articulate conclusions of the mind. Ordered, deft, and polished, they have the old, classical virtues of discipline and clear frames. I suppose they exemplify what has been rather stuffily called the "manful grasp of fact in the sunshine" of the classical poet. Yet the book is undeniably warm, lively, and capable of color and nuance. "New records in old planes," writes Mr. Finch, who professes, as well as practises, traditionalism. And I think he shows, if showing were needed, that a fine sensibility can work within the strait limits of tradition and attain fresh utterance.

Mr. Duncan's book is beautifully made by Bern Porter of Berkeley; Mr. Finch's by Oxford, is not. Pains and good power have gone into the writing of both of them, and one could grow melancholy to think how many people will not read them. But this is an old complaint.

IN OLD CARMELO. A Love Story of California. By Alice Ball. Prairie City, Ill.: The Press of James A. Decker. 1947. 68 *pp.* $2.

Laid in the Carmel Valley in the early nineteenth century, and told in free verse, this is an unpretentious narrative poem, recapturing the atmosphere of the time, and more skilful than many.

VOICES IN THE WILLOWS. By Patricia Benton Mednikoff. Chicago: The Dierkes Press. 1947. 95 *pp.* $2.50.

Verse neither better nor worse than much in the more popular magazines.

REMEMBERED WEATHER. By Leone Rice Grelle. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1948. 84 *pp.* $2.50.

Simple poems, some of which have had newspaper publication. Country description of a pleasant kind.

UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF SHAW NEILSON. Edited by James De-

Rainy Cycle

By Alfred Kreymborg

THIS is a wretched day for worms
With robins in the field
Drawing, pulling, yanking worms
Until those fellows yield

Part of their rubber, then some more
Out of a pliant earth
That happily for robins caused
A perforated birth

For mesmerizing rain to raise
Things in their thirsty plight
To where they drank and then must serve
Some larger appetite

As motherly robins fly to where
Clamoring babies squirm,
Opening their mouths from gap to gap
To end each precious worm.

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vaney. Sydney, Australia: Angus & Robertson. 1947. 94 *pp.*

Posthumous verses by an Australian poet that we should know better.

THE LAST LEGEND. By Thomas O'Malley. Boston, Mass.; Bruce Humphries, Inc. 1947. 64 *pp.* $2.50.

The allegory in this narrative poem is worthy of better verse and better illustrations. The argument might have interested Yeats, but the mediocre writing would have depressed him.

AN-AM-ATED VERSE. By Al Maister. Boston: Bruce Humphries. 1947. 99 *pp.* $2.

Stunty, topical verse of an ephemeral type.

THE POEMS OF JEAN BATCHELOR. New York: Rockport Press, Inc. 1947. 100 *pp.* $2.50.

A posthumous book by a minor poet, edited by Florence S. Edsall and Abbie Huston Evans, is not often as beguiling as this one. We find here a "compassionate, rich, quickly darting, gay, and grieving mind," as Mrs. Edsall says in her foreword. There is deft light verse, such magic as in "Willow" and "Creatures of Air," and such brooding beauty as in "Autumn Evening."

EMMA LAZARUS. Selections from her poetry and prose. Edited with an introduction by Morris U. Schappes. New York: Book League; Jewish People's Fraternal Order IWO. 1947. 107 *pp.* $.75

The words of Emma Lazarus, the great Jewish-American, are inscribed at the base of our Statue of Liberty. This revised and enlarged selection of her work should be read by all true Americans. She is one of the greatest of them.

SALT WATER IN THEIR VEINS. By Jerry Doane. New York: The Fine Editions Press. 1947. 48 *pp.* $.50 and $2.

Verses by a young merchant seaman. Informal and engaging.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
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RENDEZVOUS IN BLACK *Cornell Woolrich* (Rinehart: $2)	Dogged detective perceives pattern in series of widely separated slayings and lures tragic killer to release from mortal coils.	Relentless search for vengeful, unbalanced murderer, establishment of mysterious motive, and shrewd setting of final trap add up to prime suspense.	Absorbing *tour de force*
MANY A MONSTER *Robert Finnegan* (Simon & Schuster: $2)	"Ink - hawk" Banion, covering escape of man convicted of triple female dismemberment, scents new angle and follows through to gory end.	Shrewd crime-reporter, and his rival on another sheet, keep gruesome—but understated—yarn moving rapidly to well-worked-out conclusion.	Commendable
WILDERS WALK AWAY *Herbert Brean* (Morrow: $2.50)	Various Vermont villagers' eerie vanishing, from 1775 to present, finally solved by free-lance writer, who finds old corpses and contemporary killer.	Best American newcomer of year, so far. Good writing, able plotting, agreeable characters, pleasant background, and some really hair-raising situations.	Grade A

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THE POET AND THE GENERAL

(Continued from page 11)

his estimates had proved correct. I probably would have started swimming for Africa. In any event, I told Leigh-Mallory, since I saw that he was greatly troubled, to return to his office and write me a letter putting his objections in writing. I told him that if the airborne attack turned out disastrously as he anticipated, that it was to be clear and of record that he was not to blame, and that the full fault and responsibility were mine. He did just that. When the attack finally took place, it was successful as you remember. We had incredibly few casualties. And when the reports started coming in, Leigh-Mallory couldn't wait until morning to tell me. He called me at 4 A.M. and practically choking with emotion said, 'It's a success, it's a success!' He was so relieved to think that the men had come through and not been wiped out. He had been thinking of the men the whole time."

Of the Bulge, Eisenhower pointed out that most reporters and writers tended to isolate it and consider it a separate battle or phase of the war. "In reality it was only an integral part of the whole campaign and should be studied in that light. There was the whole front from the Atlantic virtually to the Swiss border. We had been at the job for months. The Ardennes was a part of it in point of space and time and not a separate thing to itself."

Returning again to the subject of morale, the General recounted the now famous incident when American troops were moving forward to attack across the Rhine. "I wanted to know how they felt, and the best way to find out was to walk along with them. I'd talk with one soldier in the company and then drop back a dozen or so men and talk with another. One boy I talked to seemed nervous and scared. Said that he was. So I changed the subject and we talked about other things—where he was from, how far we had already come in the campaign. After a bit I went back to my first question and asked him how he felt about the attack now. 'General, I feel fine.' I wondered what had made the change, and I asked him. He said, 'Well, when you're here, General, there's nothing to worry about'." Eisenhower chuckled. "What the boy meant was that with top Army brass around, everything must be perfectly safe."

SANDBURG then expressed concern over Europe and what he characterized as American indifference, or at least lack of knowledge of and understanding for Europe's problems. The General said, "The Marshall Plan is as simple as democracy or dictatorship. People should see it as clearly as that. People who think in democratic terms as we do, and people who would like to, should be supported. Otherwise they can fall under the dictator pattern, whether that pattern is Communism or Fascism. About the British trend towards Socialism, I don't believe that there is much to worry

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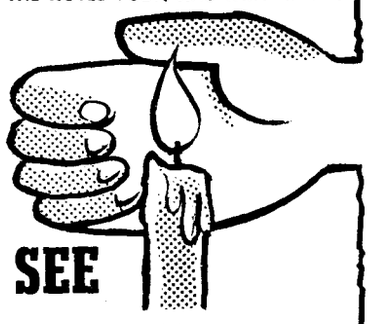

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about as far as we're concerned. I cannot believe that the British people, with their hundreds of years of respect for the dignity of man as an individual, and for his rights, will ever submit to any form of dictatorship. The word Socialism is used. What is happening actually is that the British people and nation, faced with the greatest economic and political crisis in their history, are working out their destiny with great British courage. They need our support and understanding. After all, in the event of any world trouble, they are our natural allies."

ABOUT the possibility of a future war, Eisenhower expressed himself unmistakably. "Every man should work his fingers to the bone to see that war does not happen." The General held both hands out with palms upward and fingers spread. "The man who works against peace is a criminal. On the other hand, we must be strong and prepared. We cannot afford to relax in that direction, because it would weaken our voice for peace."

Carl Sandburg had been seated for some time, and I suggested that the General might like to hear one of his songs. He walked across the office to

his guitar, took it out of the case and returned to the General's desk, where he had stood when he first came in. He looked beyond Eisenhower sitting relaxed at his desk. He looked beyond the American flag in its stand by the window, and out across the great view of the nation's capital. He looked across the Potomac to the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Strumming the guitar slowly, he spoke in his deep, resonant voice, "I'm going to sing you an old song about America. It was written by Joseph Warren, a Boston physician who died in the Battle of Bunker Hill. It is a genuine antique. The pronunciation of the word then was 'Americay.' And yet it is an appropriate song

The Lady on the Chartreuse Couch

By Don Gordon

THE LADY on the chartreuse couch is looking for herself;
reality is a drawn shade
Between the statue and the analyst. The child materializes
through the glass bricks
In the sacred and special twilight reserved
for the unhealthy:

the house appears in its decade, the rubber plant
in the hall,
the giant shadows from cellar to attic, someone
she hated, someone she loved,
the guilt, the web in the corner, the fear
of the hairy insect;

there was a time of security beyond the mind,
a sense
of warmth and water; afterward, light, noise,
terror and space;
memory, green as a divining rod, points
to the lost uterine lake.

The womb of the real world was incandescent,
nothing retreats from solid to fire;
The earth like a round wind is sustained
by continuous motion;
The satellites are only secure together, the sun
holds the burning family.

Neurosis: the belief in separate salvation.
Order in a single brain is disengaged, a solitary planet
in the sky;
Men and constellations are in hazardous motion, one star
is not quietly spared.

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today. It is called 'Free Americay.' The tune is 'The British Grenadiers'." Then he sang:

The seat of Science, Athens, and
earth's proud mistress, Rome,
Where now are all their glories?
You scarce can find a tomb.
Then guard your rights, Americans,
nor stoop to lawless sway,
Oppose, oppose, oppose for North
Americay.

We led fair Freedom hither and, lo,
the desert smiled,
A paradise of pleasure was opened
in the wild.
Your harvest, bold Americans, no
power shall snatch away!
Huzza, huzza, huzza, for free Amer-
icay.

Omitting stanzas and combining others, he finished:

Lift up your hands, ye heroes, and
swear with proud disdain,
The wretch that would ensnare you
shall lay his snares in vain:
Should Europe empty all her force,
we'll meet her in array.
And fight and shout, and fight for
North Americay.

Torn from a world of tyrants, be-
neath this western sky
We formed a new dominion, a land
of liberty;
And the nations over the ocean
spread shall tremble and obey
The sons, the sons, the sons of brave
Americay.

It was my impression that General Eisenhower liked it all except for the "tremble and obey." He said, "Warren certainly didn't have any mean idea of empire!"

As we were about to leave, Sandburg, who appreciates the hometown aspects of great men, asked Eisenhower about his nickname. "Dwight D. Eisenhower. Where did the Ike come from, General?"

Eisenhower smiled. "All of us, oddly enough, were called Ike. All the brothers. One of us was Ugly Ike, another Big Ike. I was Red Ike, because of my red face. The others outgrew the nickname, but mine always stuck, and it was one of the luckiest things that could have happened to me. A soldier always likes a good name for his officers and generals. Ike was a good name. When they called me Uncle Ike, or during the war just plain Ike, I knew that everything was going well."

The two men were shaking hands at the door. Sandburg looked at the General. "I can understand why they used that name."

As we walked out through the corridors of the Pentagon, Sandburg snorted, "He's diffident about his job at Columbia! He's no scholar! Why Columbia's getting the pick of them all. He's got what the greatest scholars of all time have had—wisdom and humanity."

He continued to mull over his impression of the General, and as we left the Pentagon, he came out with a succinct and classic: "Him and Niagara Falls!"

Duncan Emrich, formerly chief American historian at General Eisenhower's SHAEF headquarters in England, France, and Germany, is now with the Library of Congress as chief of its folklore section.

Defiance

By Margaret Bartlett

NO SPRING can melt
the deadly frozen winter
of the distant heart.
Too far from sight and sound
and touch and light,
I wander aimless, turning on the spit
of life.
O ice! O frozen poles!
preserve for ever, far,
through every summer,
the once known reaches of my heart.

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MUSIC ON TAPE AND WIRE

AS OF this writing, I see no prospect that magnetic recording will replace disc recording for musical purposes. The inherent disabilities of the breed—both wire and tape—are dead agin it, and the advantages of the medium lie elsewhere.

The striking feature of wire and tape is of course continuity—from a half hour on up—plus the erasing feature: record anew on top of an old recording and the new one wipes off the old automatically. New and vital uses have been found, in radio, and in the office and home, for this unprecedented ability to take down long, uninterrupted stretches of sound with minimum of cost and trouble. I bought a "popular priced" wire recorder for this very feature, to study whole programs of radio music. But alas, I am about to sell it. I have the programs; but the music is quite unsatisfactory as thus recorded. Magnetically recorded music is, price for price, enormously inferior to disc recording. Too often it is intolerable in the listening.

Intolerable because of poor quality, but more fundamentally because of instability of pitch. Tape is inherently better than wire, but there is still an unaccountable and profoundly distressing unevenness, not directly measurable, but all the more insidious to the musical ear in its ability to destroy musical realism. Basically, the trouble is in the lack of the heavy, direct-coupled, flywheel action that makes disc recording tolerable (most of the time), as to pitch. Mechanically it is impossible to equal this solidity of motion with a moving wire or tape, and problems of winding in the case of wire make it worse. True, variations may be sub-microscopic, but the ear is absolutely arbitrary in this respect, its standards exacting beyond instrumental measurement. Magnetic sound quality (aside from pitch) is also relatively poor. Good, perhaps, if you are used to the quality of a portable phonograph; good, if you don't mind absent highs, doubtful bass, and considerable distortion and incidental noise. But not by any stretch of imagination good by comparable disc recording standards. There is a peculiar dead quality to magnetically recorded music beyond even this analysis that leaves this writer, to date, with a pit-of-the-stomach feeling.

If you buy a recorder, try tape. It is mechanically more stable as to pitch—a crucial point. It can be easily edited, patched, labeled. It doesn't snarl. But by all means ignore any machine, of either type, that *lacks a fast forward speed*, comparable to the fast rewind. (Otherwise, to get at the last minutes of a one-hour recording you must run your machine for fifty-five minutes!) Insist, too, on a mechanical counter or index device, to locate the desired spots on the recording. You can get any of these features now—for a price.

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REGISTER YOUR OUT-OF-PRINT BOOK WANTS with me for effective, inexpensive service. NATHAN SIMONS, 3440 Gates Place, N.Y.C. 67.

PERSONALS

SILVER LAKE, N. H. for summer rental completely furnished house, 4 bedrooms, maids' quarters, 2 baths, large living, dining rooms, fireplace, study, garage. Extensive mountain view, swimming 5 minutes away. Box 326-Y.

FRANCE OR BUST! Three college girls (some French knowledge) desire position for passage. Box 327-Y.

TRAVELLING THIS SUMMER? Need governess for your children? College graduate, speaks French. Excellent references. Box 328-Y.

CULTURED, VERSATILE MAN seeks mature lady's correspondence with similar attainments. Box 329-Y.

YOUNG COUPLE—Harvard, Vassar graduates; teachers and students in physics and mathematics desire interesting summer employment. Box 330-Y.

TO WRITER, COMPOSER OR STUDENT seeking ideal spot for creative work or study: Bachelor nearing fifty will share large, comfortable lakeside home, Chicago area, at modest cost. Grand piano, reed organ, both wire and disc recording equipment. Sizable libraries both boks and recordings. Owner gone days. Cheap Chicago transportation available. Box 331-Y.

GENIAL, COLLEGE GRADS! Would you lend Navy vet and sister your college alumnae-alumni directory for three months? Faithfully returned. Warmly grateful. Please send to Box 332-Y.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT? Information discreetly developed. Any matter, person, problem, anywhere. Personal Business assignments, representation undertaken. Nationwide. Officially licensed, bonded service. Established 1922. Reasonable. Confidential. William Herman, 170 Broadway, N.Y.C.

CIGARETTES—Popular brands; minimum 3 cartons. Price $1.45 per carton postpaid. Send check or money order. Ace Mail Order Co., East Orange 52, N. J.

WOULD SOMEONE LONELY or perhaps physically handicapped like to correspond with a mature woman —choosing his own subject? Box 333-Y.

SEMINAR-TOUR OF EUROPE. Interview leaders, study conditions. For writers, lecturers, professors. Dr. Fisk, State College, San Francisco 2, Calif.

COUNTRY DOCTOR desires to earn extra pennies by free lance writing on medical topics for laymen. Any offers? Box 334-Y.

APRONS, unusual styles, fine materials, $1.50 and $2.50 postpaid. Julia Sells, 1434 Jarvis, Chicago, Ill.

EX-ARMY OFFICER, Oriental theatre, not tall, dark, or handsome, interested in handicrafts, photography welcomes sincere, feminine correspondence. Box 335-Y.

TUNISIAN WATERCOLOR SCENES. French artist, Degeilh. Framed $15. Box 336-Y.

ASSOCIATE IN ARTS DIPLOMA earned by correspondence. Major in literature. University Foundation, SR, at St. Augustine, Florida.

(Continued on page 50)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from page 49)

LIBRARIANS ATTENTION! Position open for experienced librarian in suburban Philadelphia. Box 337-Y.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, mature, lover good music, literature, quiet living, writer social and human behavior problems with will and background to help solve same, would correspond those similar interests. Box 342-Y.

ARDENT PLAYGOER (MALE) would like to discuss current plays with ardent playgoers. Box 343-Y.

YOUNG WRITER-PHOTOGRAPHER, tired of banality, invites correspondence from extraordinary modern miss. Box 344-Y.

ALERT, intelligent, bewildered young woman trying to temper idealism with realism, desires correspondence with gentleman similarly afflicted. Box 345-Y.

GREEN SHADOWS, Lyme, Conn., quiet, informal country life; good food, comfortable beds.

ENJOY OLD WORLD CHARM in America's oldest City. Valencia Hotel, St. Augustine, Florida.

HOTEL ALGONQUIN, 59 West 44 St., N.Y.C. 18, Half a block from Fifth Avenue. We are offering special week-end rates for Friday, Saturday and Sunday (three nights). Single room and bath, $12., double room and bath, $17.50, Sitting room, bedroom and bath, $23.50. Excellent restaurant. Within walking distance of better shops and theatres.

FURNISHED ROOM, large, sunny—kitchen privileges, West Bronx, N.Y.C. Box 346-Y.

CAPABLE YOUNG WOMAN, university graduate student, seeks interesting summer employment. Qualified tutor, willing to travel. Knows Spanish, French, likes people, literature, the arts. References exchanged. Box 347-Y.

AUTHORS AGENT, also editorial and publicity experience with top publishing firm, seeks opening with established literary agency where additional list of well-known and promising authors, plus secretarial qualifications will be of value. Box 348-Y.

REASONABLE, INTELLIGENT MALE wishes intriguing correspondence from alert, sophisticated females. Box 350-Y.

"52nd STREET REMBRANDT", says Bill Leonard over C.B.S. "will capture you on canvas!" Pastel, oils. $75 to $250. N.Y.C. Vanderbilt 6-4972, Gari.

EXPEDITION FOR BOYS to American Southwest. Recruiting beginning journalists, naturalists, radio operators. Two months of field work under competent staff. Prospectus available. Hillis L. Howie, Community School, 5400 De Mun Avenue, St. Louis 5, Mo.

WRITER, 25, B.S., English Honors, M.S. Journalism, experience in public relations, magazine work, seeks good job anywhere. Box 351-Y.

REASONABLY YOUNG PROFESSIONAL MAN, slightly unconventional, interested in literature and other arts desires correspondence with gals of similar inclinations. Box 352-Y.

SHORE COTTAGE, Bayville, L. I. The place people like to come back to! Bathing, boating, fishing. Rooms, kitchen privileges. Box 297-Y.

MOSTLY URBANE but sometimes naive, mature, ex-officer craves correspondence with gay-hearted, intelligent, broadminded, feminine person. Box 353-Y.

SECRETARIAL, EDITORIAL and promotion assistant. Experience with established publishers. Part-time. Box 349-Y.

JUVENILE AUTHORS! Will consider for inclusion in anthology regional stories, 1,000 to 2,000 words about contemporary teen-agers with interesting part-time jobs; job germane to plot. 1 to 2 cents word. Box 354-Y.

LONELY, PROFESSIONAL MAN, rural dweller with sense of humor and who believes life can begin at 40, bookworm, music lover, interested in outdoor pastime would like to correspond with like-minded female. Box 355-Y.

SCIENTIST, interested in psychology, cooperation, art, reading, hiking, and the art of living, being caught lonesome in the spring, seeks sincere, intelligent, though not necessarily intellectural, thoughtful and yet gay, young woman as pengal. Box 356-Y.

LADY WILL SHARE HER APARTMENT, exchange nominal sum, companionship, literary assistance. Box 358-Y.

WOULD CONGENIAL, resilient female inspire country editor, whose recreation veers towards emulating Kreisler and Keats? Box 359-Y.

WRITERS! Fresh market lists: short-shorts, fillers, poetry (pay). 50¢ a list. All 3 $1. R. W. Hall, 1424 7 St., Santa Monica, Calif.

ENTREPRENEUR, 40, experienced and capable, wants promotional chance with accent on future possibilities. Must be interesting, unusual, and profitable. Immediate income unimportant. References. No screwballs, please. Box 338-Y.

MATURE WOMAN, myriad interests, temporarily sidetracked from life, earnestly desires to correspond with mature man possessing zest for life and sense of humor. Box 339-Y.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN would like correspondence from females interested in literature, outdoor life. Box 340-Y.

WANTED: EDITORIAL ASSISTANT, preferably male, to take charge of editorial department long, established publication. Knowledge of medical terminology desirable but not essential. Must be experienced in news editing and be able to direct others. Excellent opportunity. Chicago location. Box 341-Y.

MATURE MAN, varied interests, sincere, desires correspondence with refined woman. Box 360-Y.

Specialist in reading seeks to share office with medical doctor; preferably psychiatrist, or neurologist. East 70's to 90's, N.Y.C. J. N. Gamble—M.A., 111 East 80 St., N.Y.C.

INTERESTING GROUP PLANNING European tour. Leaving about June 30. Box 182, East Orange, N. J.

EUROPEAN GIRL, widely traveled, fluent English, French, German, Dutch. Experience: translations, journalism, teaching, radio, library, typing. Available immediately part-time work, N.Y.C. Box 370-Y.

INTELLIGENT WOMAN, would like position as housekeeper. Good cook, manager. N.Y.C. Box 371-Y.

DOD'S PEERAGE. Now obtainable if ordered promptly. Although again being published, this handy and authoritative reference book is still difficult to secure. We fortunately have received a limited supply of the 106th edition for distribution, but only on a first-come-first-served basis. We urge your immediate response. British Publications, Inc., 150 East 35 Street, N.Y.C. 16. MUrray Hill 9-2242.

A JOB-GETTING RESUME wins in competition. Send me your Experience Data to re-style, $15. (Or send $1 for "Your Job Letter" reprint). Write Matilda Rogers, Job Resume Specialist, 240 West 73 St., N.Y.C. 23.

RENT FURNISHED SUMMER SEASON—attractive cottage on Cape Cod, garage, all improvements. Helm, 299 Madison Avenue, N.Y.C.

COLLEGE STUDENT desires summer employment as traveling companion or as tutor of English, mathematics, to children 10 to 16. Capable driver. Interests: nature, sports, literature. Box 372-Y.

THE MOORS, Vinalhaven, Maine. An island Pension. 12th season. Board and room $50 and $45. Only double rooms available. Harold Vinal, 687 Lexington Ave., N.Y.C. until May.

WANTED—Young woman to spend summer on Vermont farm, with family consisting of painter, writer and composer. Board, room and cigarette money, for help with evening meal (less than 2 hours daily). Swim, hike, loaf, paint or write rest of time. Write Box 373-Y.

GAL COPYWRITER in Chicago wishes room in Los Angeles. Will rent, baby-sit or assist with writing. Box 374-Y.

INDUSTRIOUS YOUNG WOMAN WISHES POSITION. Early thirties, experienced management large or small household, children (kindergartner). Knowledge nursing, secretarial duties, driving. Can assume complete responsibility. Box 375-Y.

WILL MATURE MALE rescue routine-weary professional woman via correspondence. Box 376-Y.

NEED FRENCH LANGUAGE LITERATURE PHILOLOGY taught with enthusiasm? Assistant professor with eight years college teaching after study in France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Ph.D. Radcliffe. Prefers Boston area. Box 377-Y.

MAIL CLERK interesting opportunity with Stock Exchange firm to handle work on 6,000 name mailing list and handle printing details on monthly house organ and annual year book. Job requires punctilious attention to details, competent typist, some experience in correspondence. Write or phone for appointment. Arthur Wiesenberger & Co., 61 Broadway, N.Y.C.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH INTERESTING GENTLEMAN would make life more exciting for young woman caught in boredom. Box 378-Y.

CULTURED, SPANISH-SPEAKING GENTLEMAN, interested life, music, literature, invites female correspondence. Box 379-Y.

BACHELOR EDITOR, 36, wants summer week-end cottage or room, couple hours N.Y.C. by train; water or mountains, a few people around. Box 391-Y.

YOUNG WOMAN, experienced editorial worker writer, researcher, seeks full-time part-time, free-lance work N.Y.C. Box 380-Y.

BUCKS COUNTY modern home, large studio, for share-basis living with widow-owner. Week-ends share, week-long yours development. Brook. No children. Genuine liberal interests in cooperative plan for making home. Permanent idea. Moderate rent. Box 381-Y.

GENTLEMAN, nature lover, serious music, outdoors, cultured, sense of humor, seeks correspondence young lady. Box 382-Y.

MAN, literate, would like part-time job. 1 P.M. until 5 P.M. or less hours a day. Research, librarian, proof-reading, baby-sitter or what have you. N.Y.C. Box 383-Y.

ADVENTUROUS YOUNG LADY would like to correspond with lonely gentleman. Box 384-Y.

O'NEILL ENTHUSIAST may buy Provincetown Plays original edition and original program listing O'Neill as actor. Other O'Neill items. Box 385-Y.

FOR PLEASANT YOUNG MAN who needs a home and part-time work in the nearby country: private room, bath, good meals, good library and $16 a week in publisher's Connecticut home in exchange for six hours work daily in garden and grounds. Weekends free. Box 386-Y.

TAKING YOUR CHILDREN ABROAD THIS SUMMER? Wouldn't you like Wellesley graduate 1944 as companion-tutor for them? Three years' teaching; grades 7-12; history, geography, economics, Latin. Know French. Ex-camp counselor; play tennis, bridge. Box 387-Y.

2 WILLIAMS GRADUATES accept any mission to South America or Alaska this summer. Box 388-Y.

INTELLIGENT YOUNG MAN desires interesting summer position. Enjoys traveling, literature, theatre. Would make good companion, secretary. Box 389-Y.

LIKE THE COUNTRY? Come to Graymont, an old Colonial farmhouse. Good food. R.D. 2, Middlebury, Vermont.

OUT-OF-TOWNERS, I'll be your New York secretary! Inquire! Also expert manuscript typist. Lynne Lovelace, 720 West 170 St., N.Y.C. 32. WAtkins 8-4620.

CAT, DOG, AND HORSE LOVERS should have special issues of National Geographic with magnificent color plates at $2.50 each. Send for free list. Box 390-Y.

LANIER (on the Piscataqua) Eliot, Maine. Food, lodging, gardens, pines, salt-river beach.

ENLARGEMENTS IN ALBUM FORM developed and printed in one continuous story-telling arrangement. Any 8-exposure roll reproduced this novel, loose-leaf way for only 30¢. Reprints 4¢ each. Extra prompt service! Clip this ad for free mailers. Larga-Pic, Box Z-16, Brookline, Mass.

"TO SLEEP: Perchance to dream: Ay, there's the rub:" You were an optimist Bill Shakespeare. No radios, no honking auto horns and other modern sleep preventives in your time. Well, we do sleep and dream when using "Flents Anti-Noise Ear Stopples"—Soothers for Snoozers, on the market since 1927. Trial box 25¢. Flents Products Co., Inc. Dept. SR-18, 103 Park Ave., N.Y.C. 17.

TALK FRENCH IN THREE MONTHS (Idiomatic). Beginners, advanced. Parisian. N.Y.C. LAckawanna 4-7451, weekdays.

PUBLISHERS SEEKING NOVELS. Appraisal $5. Editorial assistance available. Bertha Klausner, 130 East 40 St., N.Y.C.

MERRIEBROOK, Poughquag, New York. Delightful, peaceful, homestead. Tempting meals, inexpensive. North Clove 2583.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC No. 730

Reg. U. S. Patent Office

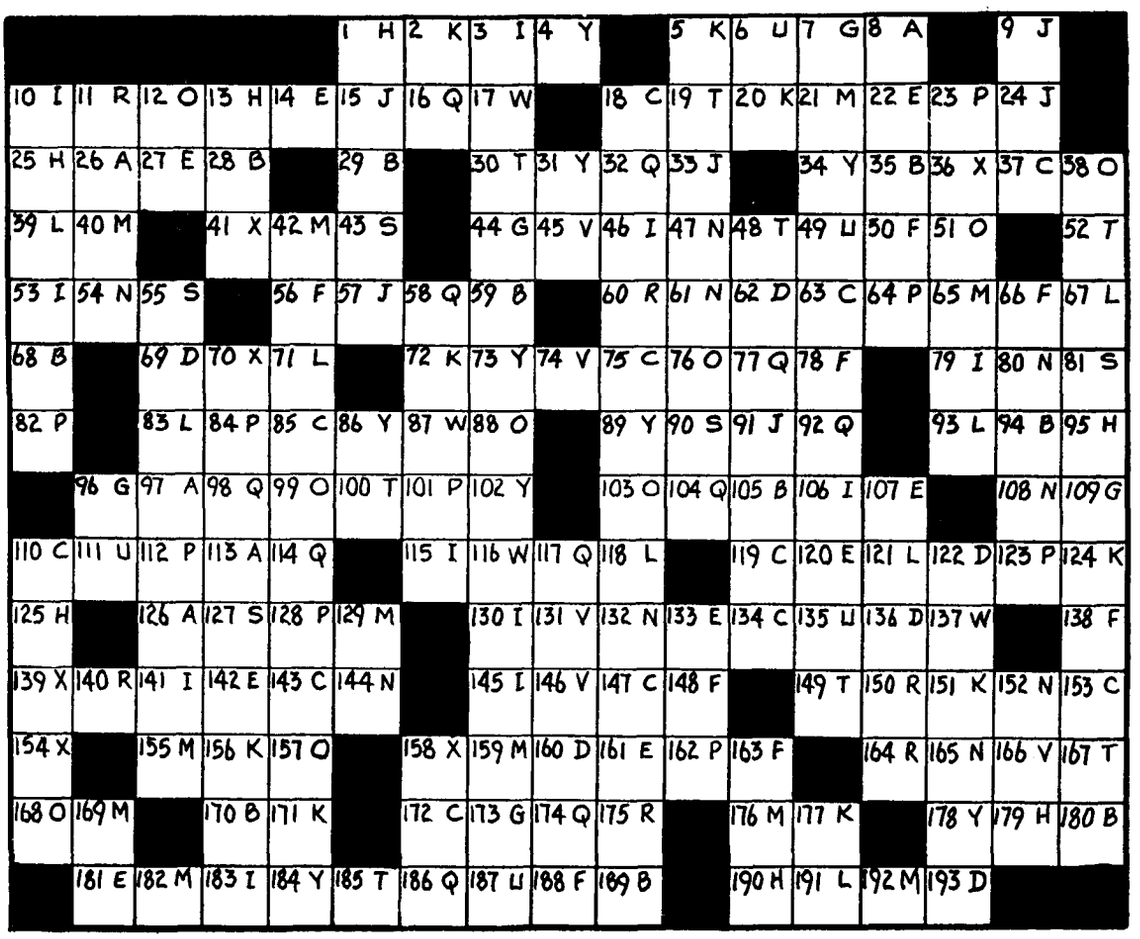
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. American Revolutionary officer known as "Mad Anthony."	126 26 8 113 97
B. In an undeveloped stage (3 wds.).	29 68 170 59 28 180 94 105 35 189
C. The forty members of the French Academy (Fr.).	110 134 119 153 143 18 147 172 37 63 85 75
D. The President's receptions (U. S.).	136 122 62 193 69 160
E. A violent or railing denunciation or accusation.	14 107 133 142 181 120 22 27 161
F. Staying for.	138 56 188 66 163 50 148 78
G. A single downstroke, as any of the three in the letter M (penmanship).	44 109 7 173 96
H. London grocer, founder of Rugby school (d. 1567).	125 25 95 13 179 1 190
I. English novelist (1884-1941; "Rogue Herries;" full name).	130 46 10 141 79 145 3 115 53 183 106
J. Not forming an angle.	9 24 15 33 57 91
K. An obsolete reed wind instrument with a curved tube (music).	72 20 2 5 124 156 171 151 177
L. The red squirrel.	71 67 83 118 191 93 39 121
M. The best or surest hope, reliance, or refuge (2 wds.).	169 129 65 182 155 159 21 192 42 176 40
N. Comedy by G. B. Shaw, 1912.	54 144 108 152 132 165 80 61 47
O. Famous English astronomer and writer (1882-1944).	157 168 99 76 88 103 38 12 51
P. English author of thirty-nine novels, most of them historical (1805-82).	123 112 23 162 101 84 64 128 82
Q. Novel by Sir Walter Scott, 1824.	104 92 174 114 98 16 77 58 117 32 186
R. American economist, late of the Federal Reserve System (1890-).	175 164 140 11 150 60
S. French composer, chiefly piano works of ultramodern school (1866-1925).	55 90 81 127 43
T. Advanced positions in thought or research (figuratively).	19 167 48 149 100 30 52 185
U. A fresh-water mussel.	135 6 187 49 111
V. To entrap.	146 166 45 74 131
W. Appellation of a roomy, comfortable chair for relaxing.	87 116 17 137
X. Character in "Romeo and Juliet."	41 70 158 36 139 154
Y. American merchant and philanthropist associated with Yale University (1793-1882).	102 178 184 34 89 73 31 4 86

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 45 of this issue.

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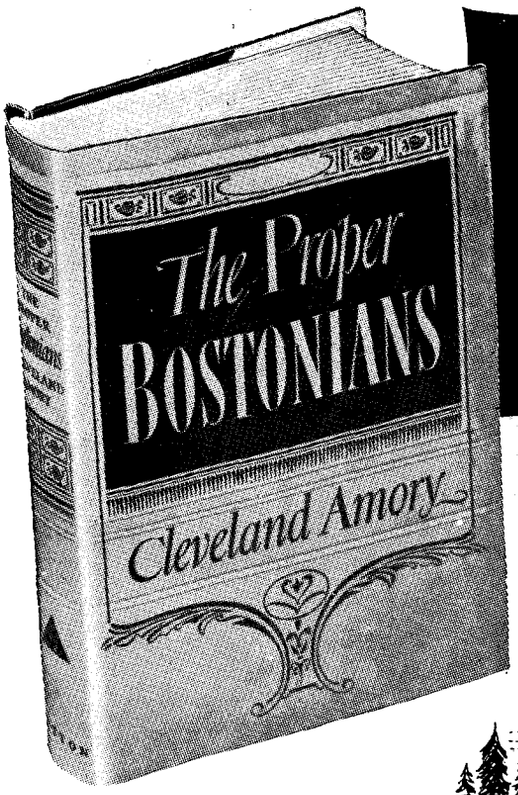

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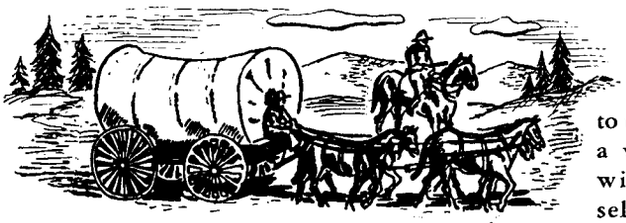

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